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# GREECE AND ROME

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## VERGIL'S HEXAMETER LINE

By A. H. ASHCROFT

### *Introductory*

IN his preface to *Some Oxford Compositions* (Oxford University Press, 1949) Mr. T. F. Higham quotes with apparent approval the statement that 'Mr. H. M. Butler was constantly haunted by the conviction that each metre had, more or less, a personality of its own'. Many years of Sixth-form teaching, and more recently the privilege of examining for the Oxford and Cambridge Schools Examination Board's Higher Certificate, have led the writer of this article not only to share Mr. Butler's conviction but also to realize that far too many pupils labour at verse composition without that sufficient knowledge of the underlying principles by which verse-making can become so fascinating a pursuit. It is believed that with this knowledge boys would not only maintain their deep interest in versification, on which they almost invariably enter with enthusiasm, but also—and this is far more important—would find, as the seven authors of *Some Oxford Compositions* have found, that they were not merely engaged in an elegant accomplishment but using one of the best means to a higher standard of scholarship.

This essay is written with the further conviction that the boy who has gained some knowledge of the inner 'personality' of Vergil's hexameter line—a personality that determines, as Mr. Butler claimed, both its spirit and its form—will have very little difficulty in learning to appreciate more fully all except the more recondite metres both in Latin and in Greek.

In the following paragraphs the majority of the quotations from Vergil have been taken from *Aeneid*, book iv; it is hoped that this will simplify the task of looking up the references; will encourage a closer study of a book which is not greatly dependent on the other books of the *Aeneid* for its full appreciation; and, most of all, will lead pupils to make a similar close study of one or more of those other books.

Here, then, are the main principles which seem to have guided Vergil in his writing, and to have given his lines their unique personality.

### 1. *The principle of the line-ending*

It would appear that the first rule given to beginners by many teachers



and many books is that 'the fifth foot must be a dactyl'. This is misleading, and probably accounts in part for the frequent recurrence in boys' compositions of line-endings like *Turnus capit urbem, prisci genitores, incommitatus, terribilis dux*, and *veniunt ad Orestem*. The real principle which governs the ending of the line is very different from this so-called rule, and has a far deeper significance, which boys need to know before they start composing at all.

The first duty of all poetry, whatever the language in which it is written, is to appeal to the ear: it is therefore bound by metrical rules—rules which are stricter in Latin than in English. But in spite of this limitation all words used must be given their normal pronunciation, with the inevitable result that *strict scansion and correct pronunciation are frequently at variance*. Shakespeare, for example, wrote iambic senarii, but this does not mean that we recite Portia's opening speech in the Court of Justice as if Shakespeare had written 'The quallitee o' mercy is no' strained'. We realize that if each foot was a perfect iambus, and if the breaking power of the caesura was not available, there would be a monotonous sing-song effect, utterly unnatural.

To the critic who may complain that all this is obvious, the reply is that in actual fact five out of six boys, on being asked to recite the opening line of the *Aeneid*, will say 'arma virumque canó'. They are apparently NOT made aware that the Latin for 'I sing', whether in prose or in verse, is *cáno*, and never anything else. Similarly, when one recites the opening line of book iv one must say NOT 'at regina graveé' but 'at regina grávi'.

This, then, is where one arrives at the principle of Vergil's line-ending: this war between pronunciation and scansion would confuse the ear, and would hide the music too greatly, unless there were some check upon it. Vergil's rule, therefore, is not simply that 'the fifth foot shall be a dactyl', but also that *in the two final feet of the line scansion and pronunciation must coincide*. Thus at the end of every line there is a soothing sense to the ear of 'port after stormy seas', of reconciliation after quarrel. The line has masculinity, liberty, and power, but invariably bows to peace and order at the last; there is, in fact, music without licence.

It will not now require much study of the line-ending to bring about the realization that in order to obey this primary Vergilian principle every line must end EITHER in a spondee [or trochee, because the last syllable of the line has sufficient weight, even though short, to satisfy the ear] OR in a bacchius (— —). *Saucia cura* (A. iv. 1) and *dat cura quietem* (A. iv. 5) both obey the principle laid down; but the same is



not true of *Turnus capit urbem, prisci genitores, veniunt ad Orestem*, all of which end with a double-trochee sound to the ear: the same ear-effect is given, though to a less extent, by the quinquesyllabic *incomitatus* where just a shade of too great weight falls on the syllable *com*. *Terribilis dux* cannot be made to sound like dactyl-cum-spondee without putting ugly and undue weight on the syllable *is*.

Like all great writers Vergil finds occasion, and often frequent occasion, to break his own principle; and it is, in fact, these 'lawless' lines which largely give charm and variety to his writing. But the study of abnormal lines can best be left to later consideration.

## 2. *The principle governing the use of the caesura*

Many pupils seem to be given the impression that 'caesura' means a break or cut in the third foot of the line, rather than the truth that this particular break is the one most commonly found. Boys should be taught at the outset that every normal line in the *Aeneid* contains EITHER a caesura in the third foot, e.g. 'at regina gravi | iamdudum saucia cura' (*A. iv. 1*) OR a twofold caesura in the second and fourth feet, e.g. 'suspectas | habuisse domos | Karthaginis altae' (*A. iv. 97*); they should further be told that the proportion between these two variants is about 5 to 1, though in the fourth book what one may call the secondary and double caesura is rather less frequently used. In spite of this truth, one continually finds boys' versions in which there is no single variation from the third-foot caesura. Vergil's charm and power of variety are not copied.

But boys need further to have it impressed upon them that the caesura plays a far more important part in the music of the hexameter line than is revealed by the two essential employments of it. There is no foot in which the strong caesura cannot be found, though it is exceptional in the fifth and sixth feet. Its purpose in these places will be discussed under 'The principle governing the use of lawless lines'.

It is, in fact, largely the caesura which makes a line 'run'. The unit of the line is the foot, and whenever a word ends without at the same time completing a foot, the ear is made expectant for that completion. Take *A. iv. 1* for an example: it starts 'at—regina gravi': is it not true that the initial monosyllable urges the ear and/or eye on to the next word to a surprisingly dramatic extent? Or take this line: 'extemplo Libyae magnas it Fama per urbes' (*A. iv. 173*). *Extemplo* introduces the seriousness of the impact of Fama on the developing events, but the caesura in the second foot (again urging eye and ear forwards) prevents the solemnity from being overdone.



For the effect of a strong caesura in the fourth foot see *A. iv. 135*, 'stat sonipes ac frena ferox spumantia mandit'. This is one of the normal second-foot and fourth-foot caesura lines, and shows that their effect is to be rather faster than the line with the simple long pause in the third foot. Contrast, for example, *A. iv. 17* 'postquam primus amor | deceptam morte fefellit', a statelier, slower line altogether. But though the *stat sonipes* line is faster, we should notice how the stop at *ferox* gives us time to dwell on and appreciate the pride and statuesque magnificence of the queen's charger.

But nothing has yet been said of the weaker, trochaic caesura, which is of course in the third foot the primary caesura used by Homer for his faster-moving lines, though very rarely used so by Vergil (an excellent example of his realization that, indebted as he obviously was to Homer, he could not bend the dignified Latin language to a close imitation of Greek form); but when he does use the trochee for his main caesura, he does so in a masterly way. There are three examples of it in book iv, and they are worth separate consideration:

(1) 'luna premit suadentque | cadentia sidera somnos' (*A. iv. 81*). After the strong caesura in the second foot the fast rhythm of the line, aided by the echo of the syllable *dent* (which reminds one of the nodding of the head when attacked by sleep) and the fourfold use of the letter *s*, suggests in a most masterly way the insistent power of drowsiness.

(2) *A. iv. 486*, 'spargens umida mella | soporiferumque papaver', where the trochaic caesura is the only one, and the gentle resistlessness of sleep is equally effectively suggested.

(3) In *A. iv. 316* we have 'per conubia nostra, per inceptos hymenaeos'. Here the trochaic break gives a clear intimation of the passion of Dido's final broken appeal. But we shall have cause to refer again to this magnificent example of a Vergilian 'lawless' line.

Not parallel with these lines are ll. 288 and 303,

Mnesthea Sergestumque | vocat | fortemque Serestum  
and

orgia nocturnusque | vocat | clamore Cithaeron,

which should rather be regarded as fairly rare examples of a strong caesura in the fourth foot without a corresponding or supporting strong caesura in the second. It is, however, perhaps worth noting that when Vergil uses this type of line, more often than not the expected break in the second foot is taken up by a prepositional prefix; cf. *A. iv. 417*:

undique con|venere; vocat | iam carbasus auras.

No study of the trochaic caesura would be complete without point-



ing out to pupils how very chary Vergil is of the use of the amphibrach (˘ – ˘). The Latin vocabulary contains a great many amphibrachs, and versifiers are very grateful for them, when writing pentameter lines; but Vergil clearly found it a too light-hearted, bouncing rhythm for epic verse. In *A.* iv, a book of 705 lines, there are only two examples of an amphibrach in the first half of the line; and how brilliantly it is used!

*A.* iv. 281 *ardet abire fuga dulcesque relinquere terras.*

The word *ardet* suggests the eagerness of spirit which the following amphibrach emphasizes. And notice how this buoyant impulse to obey the bidding of heaven is so quickly quelled by Aeneas' sense of duty to Dido. The following 'heu quid agat?' is a horrid, staccato stab of conscience: this is the very stuff of tragic dilemma, and the rare amphibrach is part of the mechanism which produces it: so true is it that the personality of Vergil's line determines both its spirit and its *form*.

Of the amphibrach in the second half of the line there are some 20 examples in 705 lines, a further proof that its usage is far rarer than would be realized by a study of schoolboys' versions.

Three examples are worthy of special study:

- (1) *A.* iv. 123-5 *diffugient comites et nocte tegentur opaca:*  
*speluncam Dido dux et Troianus eandem*  
*devenient.*

Notice that in itself l. 123 is too fast and light-hearted for that accommodation of sound to sense of which Vergil was so supreme a master; but notice further how effective by contrast is the slow fateful spondaic line that follows. Separately the lines are open to criticism: taken together they force one to recognize that Vergil's genius has triumphed again.

- (2) *A.* iv. 216-17 *nos munera templis*  
*quippe tuis ferimus famamque fovemus inanem.*

Here the light metre, aided by the alliteration, brings out remarkably the irony of the heavy anger of the speaker.

- (3) *A.* iv. 625-6 *exoriare aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor*  
*qui face Dardanio ferroque sequare colonos.*

Aided again by alliteration (and the succession of *x*, *q*, and *c* is masterly) Vergil gives us here a sense of rushing, uncontrollable passion.

In short, it is a principle with our poet to avoid the amphibrach as far as possible, unless it helps to give some specially required meaning and force to the line.

### 3. *The principle governing the use of diaeresis*

Scarcely less effective and interesting is Vergil's use of diaeresis, the

pause or breach in the line where foot and word end together. We shall begin with the spondaic diaeresis found at the end of the first foot. This is a rare usage; there are only 26 lines so beginning in *A. iv.*; the reason is not far to seek. Whereas we have seen that caesura helps a line to 'run', the spondaic diaeresis slows it up. Indeed, the effect of an initial dissyllable which is a spondee is one of jerkiness and ponderosity, e.g. *A. iv. 553* 'tantos | illa suo rumpebat pectore questus'. How much slower and heavier it is than *illa suo tantos*, etc., but how effective as a summing up of the weight of Dido's sleepless care.

In fact this type of line suggests to the ear the sound of an engine labouring to start a long goods train up a steep gradient: Puff, puff, stop. But Vergil is not a 'pretty' poet, not like Tennyson with whom he is often compared, and he is not afraid of the unmusical line if it serves a definite purpose. That purpose is nearly always to give the line dignity, but in Vergil's hands it is capable of a variety of effects. Observe this description of Fama in *A. iv. 184-5*:

nocte volat caeli medio terraeque/per umbram | stridens.

Nothing could be eerier or more menacing.

On the other hand, there is infinite pathos in *A. iv. 634*:

Annam, | cara mihi nutrix, huc siste sororem

and fine pride in *A. iv. 655*:

urbem | praeclaram statui, mea moenia vidi

and a depth of regret in *A. iv. 657-8*:

felix, | heu nimium felix, si litora tantum  
numquam | Dardaniae tetigissent nostra carinae.

Here, then, is yet another weapon in Vergil's armoury which too many versifiers fail to use aright, presumably because their attention has not been sufficiently drawn to it.

But this complete dissyllabic spondee (as opposed to the molossus (— — —), e.g. in *A. iv. 1* 'at regina gravi iamdudum saucia cura') is as rare in the fourth foot as it is in the first. There are only 25 such lines in *A. iv.* out of the possible 700. The reason why Vergil did not care for this particular diaeresis is clear: we have noted that when the end of a word coincides with the end of a foot, there is a satisfied sense of completion. But this sense so near to the end of the line as the completed fourth foot interferes with the dactyl-cum-spondee closure of the whole line. This interference is even more strongly marked when the fourth foot is part of a bacchius (— — —); and the use of a bacchius here is very rare indeed: there is no case at all in book iv. An outstanding



example is found in *A.* viii. 452-3 where the Cyclopes are sweating and straining with a heavy mass of metal in their forge:

illi inter sese multa vi brachia tollunt  
in numerum versantque tenaci | forcipe massam.

The strain of their work is clearly indicated in the slow spondaic line 452, but the final, almost superhuman effort described in *versantque tenaci forcipe massam* is actually felt by the reader.

To sum up, then, this check at the end of the fourth foot makes the end of the line seem to tag on as a clumsy and jerky afterthought: it is therefore a principle with Vergil to use it very sparingly.

It is noteworthy that the lovely end of book iv triumphs over this musical defect by the use of the quiet *s* and *v* alliteration: yet even here,

omnis et una | dilapsus calor atque in ventos | vita recessit,

the pause at *ventos* does to some extent mar the smoothness of the line. But is one right to say 'mar'? Is it not true that Vergil is giving us in the fewest of words a picture of death where the pathetic struggle for life, continued to the last, is quickly followed by peace most beautiful? It is a superb description of the passing of a great and tragic soul.

Before leaving Vergil's use of the fourth-foot spondee, the student will do well to notice that very often Vergil lightens its abruptness by a preceding monosyllabic preposition, e.g. *A.* iv. 700:

ergo Iris croceis per caelum roscida pennis

where *per caelum* is what one may call a 'one-word group'; in fact it has the sound of a molossus (— — —) rather than of a monosyllable+spondee.

There is not the same pull-up to the ear in the above line as there is in *A.* iv. 703:

sacrum iussa fero teque isto | corpore solvo.

Less need be said about the dactylic diaeresis. There are 28 examples of it in the fourth foot in book iv, and a single example will show that it makes the line too smooth and fast for constant use in an epic, where the theme is generally dignified and solemn. Cf. *A.* iv. 244:

dat somnos adimitque, et lumina | morte resignat,

where one gets something of the same effect as in the final line of the book, quoted above.

It is noteworthy that of these 28 examples there are only 10 in the very carefully written last 300 lines of the book, where the love-tragedy is brought to its pitiable denouement.

There is of course no musical or metrical objection to dactylic diaeresis between the first and second feet; so it is perhaps a little surprising that only 82 of the 705 lines of book iv so begin. But it is interesting to observe that in no less than 15 of these lines there is a strong punctuation stop at this point; interesting, because in beginners' compositions it is rare to find unusual and effective line-breaks. Their sentences nearly always come to a close at the end of the line or at the strong caesura in the third foot.

There is often a fine air of expectancy produced by the first-foot stop. See *A.* iv. 252-3:

hic primum paribus nitens Cyllenius alis  
constitit:

where after the beautiful smoothness of the god's flight there comes the abrupt arrival. We feel that events are going to move quickly, as indeed they do: see *A.* iv. 260-1:

Aenean fundantem arces ac tecta novantem  
conspicit.

There is Aeneas busying himself with his new city; the futility of it is brought out by the rhyme of *-antem*: but Mercury has seen him—the whole course of Aeneas' life is about to be changed—this is indeed a dramatic pause.

There are very few examples of the second-foot diaeresis in book iv, but note ll. 612-13:

si tangere portus  
infandum caput | ac terris adnare necesse est,

where there is an infinitude of scorn in the use of the pyrrhic ( ~ ~ ) *caput*.

Note, too, the passion and speed of ll. 673-4:

unguibus ora soror foedans et pectora pugnīs  
per medios ruit | ac morientem nomine clamat.

And yet how many schoolmasters have taught boys that they must not allow a monosyllable to make their strong third-foot caesura. They certainly must not without a purpose, without the authority of a great Vergilian principle. But if they do it correctly (and it is a very frequent usage in Vergil) they give to their teacher the all-too-rare thrill of a glimpse of scholarly taste.

4. *The principle by which Vergil overcomes the poetic weakness natural to an inflected language.*

One of the great attractions of Latin for English students is that it is an inflected language. Every boy knows, or should know, that *murum*



*aedificavit Balbus* is quite as clear, though it has not the same meaning, as the more frequent *Balbus murum aedificavit*. If it is the wall which we wish to emphasize, we are compelled to have recourse to a clumsy periphrasis—'it was a wall which Balbus built'. Latin retains the same three words and gets the required emphasis of meaning merely by a change in their order. It is this power of manipulating the order of words which largely makes Latin so attractive and so succinct a language.

Is there any other language which can write 'multo me dolore affecerunt litterae tuae', where the depth of grief is heightened by the simple device of inserting the pronoun of the person concerned between the adjective and the noun? But the fact of inflexion which is so advantageous in prose is just the reverse in verse; and this is specially so, owing to the fact that word-endings in Latin tend to be very heavy. Nouns and adjectives frequently end in *i*, *ae*, *os*, and *as*, and verbs in *unt*, *ant*, and *ent*.

Now it is a principle with Vergil to avoid as far as possible the ugly assonance of word-endings, a principle that does not seem to have been given sufficient recognition by teachers; for much of Vergil's music is due to his very great care in this respect.

Examine first his handling of noun and adjective in agreement. In the first 50 lines or so of book iv there are some 50 cases, and in only 3 have noun and adjective the same long termination: an unpleasing rhyming effect is clearly most carefully avoided. The three cases are l. 20 *miseri Sychaei*, l. 30 *lacrimis obortis*, and l. 50 *sacrisque litatis*. But in l. 13 he writes *degeneres animos timor arguit*, not *abietos animos*; in l. 22 *animumque labantem*, not *animumque caducum*; in l. 23 *veteris vestigia flammae*, not *priscae vestigia flammae*; in l. 34 *manis credis curare sepultos*, not *umbras sepultas*.

It should further be observed that where rhyme or echo is admitted, the two words are nearly always kept apart; *sacrisque litatis*, l. 50, is an exception.

In contrast to Vergil, boys will write *impavidi Teucri* where *Aeneadae fortes* would better observe this principle; *umbrosos lucos*, though *umbrosos saltus* is a ready alternative. One might ask if there is any single example of a beginning like *horum regnorum* in the *Aeneid*, but such assonances are not infrequent in Sixth-form compositions.

If a critic points to the ugly *piscosos scopulos* of iv. 255 where *piscosas cautes* is an obvious variant, one can only plead that there are times when even Homer nods.

But to turn to Vergil's way with the equally intransigent verb. No one will deny that in iv. 592-3,

non arma expedient totaque ex urbe sequuntur  
deripientque rates,

the *-ent* repetition is rather over-emphasized. Or, again, in l. 581 we have 'idem omnis simul ardor habet, rapiuntque ruuntque', where the inflected endings are so much stronger than the roots of the words used; on the other hand, the repetition of *-unt* does give a vivid suggestion of bustle and noise.

But anyone who has the patience to go carefully through this book can only come to the conclusion that Vergil is aware of a danger, and is wonderfully successful in combating it. For instance, he has a dislike of the imperfect indicative with its strong dissyllabic ending, but he does slip into an unpleasant rhyming effect in ll. 331-2:

dixerat. ille Iovis monitis immota tenebat  
lumina, et obnixus curam sub corde premebat.

There is a parallel to this in *A.* viii. 308-9:

et comitem Aenean iuxta natumque tenebat  
ingrediens varioque viam sermone levabat,

and there is a similar trap, not always avoided, in the use of the present participle and the gerund.

Among his devices for getting rid of these strong verb-endings is his use of reported speech and of historic infinitive. For an example of this recourse to the infinitive, with its various vowel-endings, see iv. 460-3:

hinc exaudiri voces et verba vocantis  
visa viri, nox cum terras obscura teneret;  
solaque culminibus ferali carmine bubo  
saepe queri et longas in fletum ducere voces.

5. *The principle that the less important words must not be placed in emphatic parts of the line, however convenient they are for purposes of scansion*

In boys' compositions there is a very natural tendency to put words in that part of the line where it is most convenient, without regard to the importance of their meaning. Far too many lines end with *ille*. There are only 2 such lines in the first 300 lines of *A.* iv. Again, the temptation to translate 'of a deep river' by *fluminis alti* at the end of the line is too great to be resisted. But there is a Vergilian principle at stake here. It is quite manifest that he dislikes a weak adjective at the end of the line. There are only 9 spondaic adjectives at the end of the



first 300 lines of book iv (*altus* providing two of them). On the other hand, there are as many as 27 bacchiac adjectives, clearly by a sort of trisyllabic right; but apart from 3 prepositions and one adverb, the remaining 259 lines all end in verb or noun.

In the same way the convenient *is*, *ea*, *id* is evidently looked at with considerable suspicion by Vergil, as being too puny for Epic usage. *Eius* and *eorum* are particularly rare, as are the over-heavy *huius* and *horum*. *Hic* and *ille* are used about 100 times in *A.* iv, but *is* only 4 times:

- (a) l. 34: *id cinerem aut manes credis curare sepultos?*
- (b) l. 203: *isque amens animi et rumore accensus amaro?*
- (c) ll. 379-80: *scilicet is superis labor est, ea cura quietos sollicitat.*
- (d) l. 479: *quae mihi reddat eum vel eo me solvat amantem.*

This last is a particularly interesting line: it is not too fanciful to assume that this double use of inflected parts of *is* is wilfully and exceptionally adopted here because Dido has determined by her death to take revenge on so paltry and untrustworthy a suitor. *Eum* and *eo* are mean little words and meanness is the charge which Aeneas has to face. But the line does anything but give authority for the constant use of *eius* and *huius* at the end of the line simply because of their metrical convenience.

6. *The principle that elision is a device which gives variety and power to the hexameter line*

One has only to read a page or two of Lucan to realize that he uses elision very sparingly; he has claims to greatness, but apart from the fact that he tends to leave too little to the reader's imagination, it is not at once clear why it is that to compare him with Vergil is to compare silver with gold; there is an uneasy sense that there is something effeminate in his lines; they run too easily, too slickly for the weight of his turbulent theme; and suddenly one realizes that it is the lack of elision that accounts for the lack of grandeur and Aeschylean sublimity which are found in line after line of the *Aeneid*. In the first 130 lines of *A.* iv there are some 55 elisions, many of them of long vowels or of endings in *-um* and *-am*. In the first 130 lines of *Pharsalia*, bk. iv, there are but 18 elisions, and the majority of them are of *que*, and none of a vowel long by nature; only one of *-um* (l. 9; *tectarum errore viarum*). There is, in fact, abounding evidence by which to prove that Vergil relied very largely on elision to avoid monotony in quieter passages, to slur

over the too strong echo of word-endings, and in rhetorical speeches to introduce the lawlessness of passion, excitement, or pathos. Only a genius could have written the famous line, *A. ix. 427*:

me, me, adsum qui feci, in me convertite ferrum.

As a specimen of versification, without regard to its meaning and context, the line is quite deplorable: as a true revelation of a man's agony of spirit it is poetic perfection. The writer once heard a promising pupil read out this line as

me madsum qui fec, in me convertite ferrum.

It cannot be too strongly stressed that such a mutilation of words in order to bring lines into the framework of normality is not only ugly in itself but deprives Vergil of one of his subtlest means of bringing variety and powerful surprise into his line. In fact elision serves much the same purpose as the anapaest in English iambic verse, or as the Euripidean resolved foot. The line is lengthened a little out of the ordinary: though every syllable must be pronounced, the elided syllable can often (not always) be spoken a little hurriedly and without emphasis. In the half-line quoted from Lucan bk. iv one is clearly not meant to emphasize the echo of *-arum*. The words should be pronounced *tectarūm errore viarūm*. On the other hand, in a great line like *A. iv. 181*:

monstrum horrendum ingens cui quot sunt corpore plumae

no slurring over the elided *-um*'s would be tolerable: the line is meant to be prolonged out of all proportion. It is the lack of proportion which makes Fama so fearsome a creature. But once again the student must be taught that Vergil never overdoes a fine effect. The following two lines, 182 and 183, are metrically without any flaw or abnormality.

tot vigiles oculi subter (mirabile dictu),  
tot linguae, totidem ora sonant, tot subrigit auris.

No: there is no further metrical lawlessness, but the horror which Fama arouses is wonderfully sustained by the fourfold repetition of *tot*.

#### 7. The principle of alliteration, assonance, etc.

There are many who look askance at alliterative verse; they associate it with the primitive beginnings of poetry, and they realize that unless it is carefully handled it can be so overdone as to make a poem sickly and cheap. To modern ears Tennyson's attempt to copy this alliterative device in his translation of the old English poem on the Battle of Brunanburh is far from successful:



Mighty the Mercian,  
 Hard was his hand-play  
 Sparing not any of  
 Those that with Anlaf,  
 Warriors over the  
 Weltering waters  
 Borne in the bark's-bosom  
 Drew to this island:  
 Doom'd to the death.

But there is no such wearisome and obvious repetition of sounds in Vergil's alliterations and echoes of consonants, although his practice of it is never still. The study of it is too vast a subject for an essay which has striven to keep within reasonably narrow bands; but there are one or two special points of interest which the student should always bear in mind when attempting to model himself on the master.

(a) Vergil is rarely content with the alliteration of a single consonant. Notice how in his use of consonance in the opening lines the hard *c* denoting Dido's great anxiety of mind is contrasted with the soft *v* which draws attention to the vulnerability of her feminine nature; and notice further how in l. 5 the *v* gives place to *m*, the gentlest labial of all. There is a poignancy in these lines which wins our sympathy for Dido from the outset. Lines 6-8 deepen this sympathy still further. Here we have a lovely vivid picture of the opening of an Italian dawn—there is no pathetic fallacy here—where *p*, *l*, and *m* interplay softly together, only to be interrupted by the recurrence of the hard *c* when Dido again enters upon the scene:

*cum sic unanimam adloquitur male sana sororem.*

Then follows a succession of *s*'s as Dido reveals, with perfect modesty, the depth and hopelessness of her love; surely these *s*'s are meant to be softly whispered?

*Anna soror, quae me suspensam insomnia terrent!  
 quis novus hic nostris successit sedibus hospes,  
 quem sese ore ferens, quam forti pectore et armis!*

(b) But pupils are not sufficiently shown that Vergil's assonant play with vowels is equally worth study. For example in ll. 329-30,

*qui te tamen ore referret,  
 non equidem omnino capta ac deserta viderer,*

there is a depth of longing in the three long *o*'s, and tremendous power of description of a broken heart in the two short *a*'s at the end *capta ac deserta*.

8. *The principle of the 'exception that proves the rule'; or, the principle governing the use of lawless lines*

It is to be expected that a poet of such power and passion as Vergil possesses will prove to be a law unto himself: his ingenuity will match his fervour. This is the full and sole explanation of his readiness to break what has been called the first Vergilian principle—that the end of the line should be either spondee or bacchius, and the fifth foot a dactyl.

There are at least four ways by which this can be done:

(a) By closing the line with a quadrisyllable, e.g. iv. 99:

quin potius pacem aeternam pactosque hymenaeos  
exercemus?

or iv. 146 Cretesque Dryopesque fremunt pictique Agathyrsi

or iv. 215 et nunc ille Paris cum semiviro comitatu

or iv. 316 per conubia nostra, per inceptos hymenaeos

or iv. 667 lamentis gemituque et femineo ululatu.

What is the effect of these lines? Surely they are something more than graecisms, more than mere copies of a very frequent Homeric ending to the line: it was of course from Homer that Vergil got the inspiration to make use of such lines: but he put the use to a special purpose of his own. As has been said above, the quadrisyllable is hard to pronounce without giving to the ear a ditrochean sound. This means that the sound is an emotional one, indicating speed, dance (the trochee is also called ὁ χορείος ποῦς), excitement, passion.

To the severe and staid Roman it suggests the volatile, unbridled East, and is therefore suspect. Thus we find both irony and scorn, a repugnance for femininity, in *semiviro comitatu* and in *femineo ululatu*, and to a slightly lesser extent in *pictique Agathyrsi*.

But in l. 99 *pactosque hymenaeos* reveals Vergil's power of developing and expanding the force of a usage which he has begun to admit into his repertory. Aided by the alliteration of the letter *p* and by the trochaic caesura-break at *exercemus* (which has the effect of a pause to see whether Jupiter is ready to answer), the quadrisyllabic ending here suggests urgency: the appeal seems to gather speed like a fast incoming tide.

In l. 316 we have the same alliterative *p*, and the same broken-hearted sound of the trochaic caesura at *nostra*. The whole effect is one of poignantly desperate pleading.

But there are only these 4 instances of this use in 700 lines. Vergil is not carried away by the excitement of novelty: he has true Roman restraint, and student versifiers should always have very cogent reasons



for using what might easily be nothing more than an affectation, a striving after the 'purple patch'.

(b) By closing the line with a monosyllable. There are only two examples in book iv. One occurs in a passage already partially discussed, but it will not be amiss to set out the lines in full afresh. In a short essay like this, one is very conscious of the danger of spoiling the *Aeneid* by too minute a dissection: all the lines hitherto quoted should really be examined with their contexts. Here, then, are six lines out of one of the grandest, most poetical speeches Vergil ever wrote (ll. 314-19):

mene fugis? per ego has lacrimas dextramque tuam te  
(quando aliud mihi iam miserae nihil ipsa reliqui),  
per conubia nostra, per inceptos hymenaeos,  
si bene quid de te merui, fuit aut tibi quicquam  
dulce meum, miserere domus labentis et istam,  
oro, si quis adhuc precibus locus, exue mentem.

In the first line, with which we are primarily concerned at the moment, we have a parallel to the *me, me, adsum, qui feci* line already discussed. Metrically it is an ugly, distorted line; there is no 'port after stormy seas'. Poetically it breathes the distress of a love that is scorned, and is a revelation of what a few words can do to give insight into a woman's tortured heart: but the lawlessness of this line is checked by the balance and normality of the line succeeding, but in l. 316 passion breaks out again, a passion that is pure and noble, when all that is worth living for is at stake. Then follows the tearful double-trochee line-ending, *tibi quicquam*, followed in its turn by the last significant appeal of the initial spondee *oro*. This is not the place to pursue the speech to its pathetically beautiful end which contains the lovely consonance of *p, v, f*, of which R. L. S. wrote so attractive an analysis. One can only express a hope that sufficient interest has been aroused in these lines to encourage a closer study of the whole speech.

The other monosyllabic ending occurs at l. 132

Massylique ruunt equites et odora canum vis.

Here the purpose is radically different. A boar-hunt is not in itself a theme that lends itself to Epic writing, but it is by the hunting episode that the great love-tragedy is developed, and so to give a dignity to the 'ruthless, keen-scented hounds' which they do not properly possess Vergil uses the lure of surprise. And *vis* is amazingly successful in suggesting a hunt that is carried out remorselessly to the death.

Parallel with this example is the one in book iii, ll. 390-2:

litoreis ingens inventa sub ilicibus sus  
triginta capitem fetus enixa iacebit,  
alba, solo recubans, albi circum ubera nati.

These lines are repeated word for word in the sequel recorded in book viii, ll. 43-45, an indication that the poet felt them to be exactly right. Vergil is here recording a legend known and loved by every Roman, but his difficulty is that the sow—especially when engaged in feeding a litter of thirty piglets—is scarcely a theme for any kind of poetry, and really out of place altogether in an Epic. The problem, then, was how to give dignity to what is on the face of it an undignified subject. The answer is that the broken principle about the coincidence of scansion and pronunciation (unless the reader is allowed to say 'sub ilici-bussus') is as successful as anything else could be. If any critic regards it as a failure, he must at least admit that the poet has made the best of a difficult job, and must surely admire the courage which would not omit a beloved legend, and the adroitness with which the story is woven into the Epic tale.

One other instance is worth recording because it is familiar to every reader of Vergil, and because through ignorance of its sheer brilliance it has often been held up to ridicule. I refer to the famous 'procumbit humi bos' of *A. v.* 481, which is of course ridiculous if boys are allowed to say 'procumbit humeebos' because that is the normal sound-ending. Properly spoken, there is great pathos and dignity in the collapse of the mute beast under the fist of the victorious and vainglorious Entellus.

(c) By closing the line with pyrrhic (˘ ˘) and spondee. There are five such lines in *A. iv.*—13, 317, 336, 420, and 702. They have a rapid, staccato effect and, as might be expected, occur in emotional speeches: they remind one that Vergil might well have matched Shakespeare himself, if he had turned playwright. Listen to this appeal of Dido to Anna, and picture the two characters acting on the stage:

miserae hoc tamen unum  
exsequere, Anna, mihi (*A. iv.* 420-1).

Or to Aeneas' protestation, which admittedly is not wholly successful:

nec me meminisse pigebit Elissae  
dum memor ipse mei, dum spiritus hos regit artus (*A. iv.* 335-6).

Notice the dramatic weight on *hos*, enabling an actor to suit the action to the word. It reminds one of St. Paul's parting words to the Church of Ephesus: 'Ye yourselves know that *these* lands ministered unto my necessities.'



But there is another use to which Vergil puts this pyrrhic+spondee ending: to suggest great speed in action. Two quotations will reveal how effective this metrical device is.

nec Turnum segnis retinet mora, sed rapit acer  
totam aciem in Teucros (*A.* x. 308-9)

and

insequitur, iam iamque manu tenet, et premit hasta (*A.* ii. 530).

(*d*) By closing the line with two spondees. This is a very rare use, but magnificently employed for solemnity's sake in *A.* iii. 12:

cum sociis natoque penatibus et magnis dis.

This line is repeated with little variation in *A.* viii. 679. One could not express reverence more nobly or succinctly.

Other examples are less effective, and can be dismissed as pure Homericisms, but one does again admire Vergil's restraint in using an obvious convenience. It is sufficient to quote *A.* viii. 345 'nec non et sacri monstrat nemus Argileti' and *A.* xii. 83 'Pylum quos ipsa decus dedit Orithyia'.

To close, there are one or two other exceptions to rule which, because they assist that variety which is perhaps the greatest characteristic of Vergil's writing, are worth brief mention.

In two instances in book iv Vergil risks the hypermetric line. They are:

(1) ll. 558-9 omnia Mercurio similis vocemque coloremque  
et crinis flavos et membra decora iuventae.

(2) ll. 629-30 'imprecor, arma armis: pugnent ipsique nepotesque.'  
haec ait et partis animum versabat in omnis.

Two things are here clear: once again the line-ending is made entirely lawless, and in both cases there follows a smooth line by way of correction and return to normality. That Vergil is conscious of law even in the moment of breaking it is revealed by the fact that technically, if it could be conceded that synapheia is admissible in Epic verse, the *-que*'s are followed by vowels, and could be regarded as elided. But the full stop at *nepotesque* makes one feel that Vergil was making no such concession to the ear. It is better to note that in the first instance under review Vergil is describing the miracle of a god appearing visibly to man. Thus *vocemque coloremque* is of material assistance to an appropriate sense of awe. In the second instance the lengthened line is a magnificent interpretation of the fearful hatred that shall extend from the fathers unto the third generation. It is a great ending to a speech of wonderfully sustained power.

Finally, this book, in company with the other eleven, brings one face to face, though only in five instances, with the unfinished line. I seem to remember that there is a story that Vergil had intended to remove these 'blemishes', if death had not forestalled his final revision. But Vergil's love of variety has been stressed throughout this essay; and it is at least justifiable to hold that here is yet one more instance of his fertility in metrical device. It is true that the unfinished lines are not all equally effective, but there is certainly pathos in Anna's *germanique minas* (l. 44). She feels that Dido, for all her greatness of spirit, needs a protector, and addresses her in much the same way as Ismene speaks to Antigone in Sophocles' play. These two women make dramatic foils to their more courageous and tragic sisters.

Equally in l. 361 there is a great depth of misery, a great revelation of loyalty divided between love and duty in *Italiam non sponte sequor*. The truncated line gives one time to dwell upon its content. There is, it may be said, much more than a normal full stop dividing the half-line from the *talia dicentem* which follows.

The further examples in ll. 400, 503, and 516 have no such obvious point. But the principle underlying the half-line has been established, and the value of variety has thus become a sufficient justification for it.

So closes a very shallow but, one hopes, a provocative survey of the personality of Vergil's line. If it has any merit at all it is this, that it may entice students to delve more deeply for themselves into the treasure-house of one of the world's greatest poets.

#### A MEDIEVAL INSTANCE OF THE IMPERFECT SUBJUNCTIVE IN PRIMARY SEQUENCE

By W. S. MAGUINNESS

THE possibility of the imperfect subjunctive, unsupported by a preceding imperfect or pluperfect subjunctive, in an indirect question in primary sequence was debated in *Greece and Rome*, vol. xvii, No. 51, pp. 128-9; vol. xviii, No. 54, p. 138; vol. xix, No. 55, p. 18; and vol. xix, No. 56, p. 89.

The difficulty of producing instances of this construction lends some interest to an example found in the lines in which Walafrid Strabo (9th cent.) compares the discomfort of Fulda with the pleasantness of his former home at Augia (Reichenau). The quatrain containing the usage is as follows:

Ecce prorumpunt lacrimae, recordor  
quam bona dudum fruerer quiete,  
cum daret felix mihimet pusillum  
Augia tectum.

The poem is printed in pp. 10-11 of Helen Waddell's *Book of Medieval Latin for Schools* (Constable & Co. Ltd.).



# HEBREW, ARAMAIC, AND THE GREEK OF THE GOSPELS

By W. LEONARD GRANT

IT is frequently remarked of the κοινή Greek of the Gospels that it bears distinct traces of Hebrew and Aramaic influence, conscious or unconscious. The average reader of the Gospels may often wonder just which of the many linguistic oddities he encounters are common to all or most forms of κοινή and which are the genuine Hebraisms or Aramaisms; he can, if of a heroic cast of mind, learn Hebrew for this one purpose (a plan which will commend itself to few), or he can read various weighty tomes, from those of Wellhausen and Burney, who see Aramaic influence everywhere, to those of Moulton and Milligan, who minimize that influence wherever possible, to that of Lagrange, who placidly pursues a *via media*. But he would probably prefer a brief essay which tries to sum up the main facts without a footnote, without an appendix, and without an axe to grind.

First, influence on syntax. Every κοινή scholar would agree that one of the commonest Semitisms in the Gospels is the initial position of the verb in the sentence. In both Hebrew and Aramaic the verb almost invariably appears first: 'the king saw the man' would (though in the Hebrew right-to-left order in which the first becomes last and the last becomes first) be expressed as *ra'ah* (verb) *hammelech* (subject) *'eth* (sign of the accusative) *ha'ish* (object). Obviously the average Aramaic-speaking Jew would write εἶδεν ὁ βασιλεὺς τὸν ἄνδρα. Now it is perfectly true that there is nothing un-Greek in the position of εἶδεν here; but it is the frequency of the occurrence, not the fact, which is significant; the initially placed verb meets us on every page of the Gospels—examples are unnecessary.

A second Semitism in which it is the frequency, not the fact, of the occurrence which is significant is the constant use of *nominativus pendens*, illustrated by Genesis iii. 12, 'the woman thou gavest me, she gave it to me . . .': the resumptive pronoun 'she' leaves the original subject dangling in mid-air, or, as Hebraists more sedately describe it, as an 'isolated inchoative'. The construction appears now and then in literary Greek, and is reasonably frequent in the κοινή of the papyri; but in neither is it of constant and continual occurrence as it is in Hebrew and Aramaic alike. It is extremely common in the fourth Gospel (28 times), far more so than in the Synoptic Gospels (21 times all told); whether

this proves, or even helps to prove, as Burney maintains, that the fourth Gospel is actually a translation from an Aramaic original is another story. It is noticeable that these two Semitisms are especially frequent in the words of Jesus, and in His epigrammatic sayings; it has been suggested that these sayings, in their original Aramaic form, were maintained in word-for-word perfection in oral tradition, and that the Greek version attempts to keep as closely to this form as possible.

A third Semitism in the syntax of the Gospels is the remarkable frequency of asyndeton. Greek, of course, tends to link every sentence to its predecessor by means of some sort of connective; when asyndeton does occur, there is good reason for it. Hebrew and Aramaic, on the other hand, are as asyndetic as English, if not more so. The result is that when we turn to the Gospels we find that the number of cases of asyndeton is very high, especially in the fourth, a fact of which Burney again makes considerable use.

A fourth Semitic characteristic is the extreme frequency of clausal parataxis, the tendency to string clauses together with 'and', avoiding subordination. In the non-literary κοινή Greek of the papyri this is quite common, and some writers (Wellhausen, Deissman, Moulton) have felt that the parataxis of the Gospels is merely that of κοινή rusticity; on the other hand, Burney (as we should expect), Milligan, and others believe that the paratactic καί could not but be influenced by the ever-recurrent *waw* of Hebrew and Aramaic: even if parataxis is characteristic of all or most non-literary κοινή, the fact that Aramaic was the native tongue of the Gospel-writers must at least have further increased the tendency to use καί. The second view is certainly a reasonable one, and even Lagrange, always conservative, subscribes to it.

In classical literary Greek, paratactic asyndeton is usually restricted to rhetorically antithetical statements; in Hebrew and Aramaic, on the contrary, it is common. It is frequent, too, in the Gospels, but how far this is to be regarded as genuine Semitism is still a matter for argument.

One of the commonest of Hebrew and Aramaic 'subordinate' constructions is the Circumstantial Clause, which at first sight one would hardly think to be a subordinate clause at all, introduced as it is by *waw* ('and'). This is a clause in which circumstances are described as attendant on the action of the main clause, but subordinate to it: 'I saw her with her purse in her hand' would become in Hebrew and Aramaic 'I saw her, and she had her purse in her hand', yet the 'and' clause would be regarded as subordinate in thought and syntax alike. In both languages such a clause is expressed by *waw*, subject, and a verb-form, and always in that order; frequently the verb-form is a participle, a



construction that lends a fantastically Hibernian flavour to some Hebrew sentences. There are a number of clear instances of circumstantial 'subordinate' clauses introduced by καί or ἀέ in the Gospels: compare Mark i. 19 and Luke xiii. 28, in both of which cases participles are used. Traces of circumstantial καί are commonest where least expected, viz. in the relatively pure Greek of Luke: as one reader of this essay has pointed out, Luke is capable of writing 'standard' Greek when he wishes to, but appears at times to adopt a Semitic flavouring consciously and deliberately.

Other subordinate constructions, too, are influenced by Semitic expression. The frequency of temporal ὥς (48 times in Luke) has been taken as a reflection of Aramaic *kadh*, while the curious irregularities in the uses of ὅς, ὅτι, and ἵνα are clearly due to the malign influence of the highly ambiguous Aramaic *di*, which can serve as a relative, as the sign of possession, as a subordinating conjunction, or as a temporal or consecutive conjunction. Small wonder if the Greek equivalents for this word gave trouble to Aramaic-speaking writers.

So much for syntax; next come grammar and vocabulary, and here we shall deal briefly with eight topics: the definite article, pronouns, temporal and inferential expressions, comparison of adjectives, interrogatives, numerals, the verb, and, finally, vocabulary.

1. There are a large number of cases of distinct Hebraisms in the uses of the definite article. In such a phrase as 'the word of God' Hebrew has no genitive form for the second noun: the words *dabhar* (both *a*'s are long) and '*Elohim* (*o* and *i* are long) are simply placed side by side to show their connexion in thought; the article is *never* used with the first noun, and, since in any Hebrew phrase the accent is on the last word, the first will be rapidly pronounced, its vowels, as a result, being weakened: 'the word of God' will then be pronounced *d'bhar* (short *a*) '*Elohim*. The first noun is said to be in the construct state, of which *dabhar* is the absolute state. We find, and quite frequently, a sort of construct state in such phrases in the Gospels, at least so far as concerns the omission of the article: βασιλίσσα in Matthew xii. 42 is an example. Oddly enough, the use of the construct is more characteristic of classical Hebrew than of the contemporary Aramaic of the first century A.D., in which the use was obsolescent.

In Hebrew a kind of generic article may be used with a noun designating a person or thing mentioned but not described, or a person or thing not yet known (*status emphaticus*). This construction, again, while regular in classical Hebrew (and hence in Septuagint Greek, which follows the Hebrew text of the O.T. with absolute and painful literalness),

was obsolescent in first-century Aramaic; the natural result is that the writers of the Gospels sometimes use such an article, sometimes not.

The Hebrew vocative is always expressed by the absolute form of the noun plus the definite article. It is true that the nominative, with or without the article, may be so used in colloquial Greek of the classical period (e.g. in the dialogue of Aristophanes), yet the frequency of this idiom in the Greek text suggests that it is here a genuine Hebraism, as in Matthew xi. 26 (ναί, ὁ πατήρ), Luke viii. 54 (ἡ παῖς, ἐγείρου), Mark ix. 25 (τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἄλλαν . . ., ἔξελεθε). The nominative used thus without the article is rare in the Gospels.

2. A common Hebrew and Aramaic idiom is the use of a pronoun to anticipate a closely following noun: 'he, the man, entered the room', or even 'he, the man, entered it, the room'. Fairly clear examples of this same idiom are Matthew iii. 4 (αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ Ἰωάννης εἶχε τὸ ἐνδυμα αὐτοῦ, . . .), Mark vi. 17 (αὐτὸς γὰρ ὁ Ἡρώδης . . . ἐκράτησε τὸν Ἰωάννην), and perhaps 22 (εἰσελθούσης τῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτῆς, τῆς Ἡρωδιάδος).

The relative pronoun frequently shows clear evidence of Semitic influence. In Hebrew the relative pronoun *'asher* is unchangeable in form. If we wish to say 'the boy who did this' in Hebrew, all is well, and we translate quite literally; but if we wish to say 'the boy whose books were lost' or 'the boy for whom I did this', we must use the cumbrous expressions 'the boy who the books were lost of him' and 'the boy who I did this for him'. The Septuagint, of course, faithfully reproduces this construction, and the Gospels frequently reflect it: ἔρχεται ὁ ἰσχυρότερός μου . . ., οὐ οὐκ εἰμι ἱκανός . . . λῦσαι τὸν ἱμάντα τὸν ὑποδημάτων αὐτοῦ (Mark i. 7; cf. John i. 27); γυνή . . ., ἣς εἶχε τὸ θυγάτριον αὐτῆς πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον . . . (Mark vii. 25; cf. also Acts xv. 17, Galatians ii. 10).

3. The curious use (26 occurrences) of πάλιν in Mark is probably a reflection of the Aramaic temporal and inferential conjunction *tubh*, 'then, further, thereupon'. Some of the instances are rather dubious (they may merely be examples of πάλιν adversative, an idiom common enough in literary Greek) but Mark xv. 13 seems a certain instance of the inferential use: 'they thereupon shouted' (οἱ δὲ πάλιν ἔκραξαν). Similarly, Luke's frequent use of ἀπὸ μιᾶς ('at once') is a reflection, or rather a direct and literal translation, of the Aramaic phrase *min* ('from') *hadha* ('one'), just as in the Greek Enoch ἐπὶ μιᾶς is a literal translation of the classical Hebrew *ke'ehadh* or *be'ehadh*.

4. Except for Arabic, the Semitic languages have no comparative or superlative adjectives: 'he is taller than my brother' becomes 'he is tall



from my brother', with 'from' (Hebrew and Aramaic *min*; Syriac *men*; Ethiopic *'emen*) used in a quasi-partitive or separative sense, while 'he is the tallest man in Canada' becomes 'he is *the* tall man in Canada'. As one would expect, we find traces of this in the Gospels: καλόν in Mark ix. 43, 45, and 47 is clearly a comparative; in Luke v. 39 χρηστός is as clearly not a positive; cf. μέγας in ix. 48, even though μικρότερος immediately precedes.

5. A very common use of the Aramaic interrogative *mah* is to introduce an indignant or astonished rhetorical question; there are a fair number of instances of τί apparently used in this way in the Gospels: compare τί οὗτος οὕτω λαλεῖ; (Mark ii. 7), τί ποιοῦσι τοῖς Σάββασιν ὃ οὐκ ἔξεστι; (ii. 24), τί Δειλοὶ ἐστε; (iv. 40 and Matthew viii. 26). Aramaic *mah* may also, as in Hebrew, be used as an exclamation ('how') modifying an adjective, adverb, or verb; of such a use of τί there seems to be at least one instance in the Gospels: καὶ τί θέλω εἰ ἤδη ἀνήφθη (Luke xii. 49; perhaps also Mark viii. 12).

6. Hebrew and Aramaic have no ordinal numerals, employing cardinals for the purpose. This, too, is reflected in the Gospels, where we find τῇ μιᾷ τῶν Σαββάτων meaning 'on the first day of the week' (Mark xvi. 2; cf. Matthew xxviii. 1; Luke xxiv. 1; John xx. 1; Acts xx. 7; 1 Corinthians xvi. 2).

7. Verb-tenses are frequently a reflection of Semitic usage. The aorist in Matthew xxiii. 2, scarcely possible of explanation by any of the normal rules of Greek idiom, clearly represents a Hebrew 'stative perfect': in Hebrew, verbs denoting state or condition are frequently used in the past tense where English would employ a present: *zaqanti*, I *am* old; *yalti*, I *am* able, I *can* (this is not to be confused with the inceptive aorist, which has no parallel in Hebrew). Certainly the aorist εὐλόκησα in Mark i. 11 represents a stative perfect (and must therefore be translated as an English present, as in the King James Version), for it is an echo of Isaiah xlii. 1, which in the Septuagint reads εὐλόκησεν, a literal rendering of the stative perfect *rats'thah* of the Hebrew original.

The passive voice is very much rarer in Aramaic than in Greek; Aramaic often, and Hebrew occasionally, prefers an active verb with a vague plural subject: 'you will surrender this document, and it will be retained here' would become in Aramaic 'you will surrender . . . , and they will retain it here', even if it is only one person who is to receive and retain the hypothetical document. We find a faithful reflection of this idiom in Gospel Greek: compare, for instance, ἡ παρθένος ἐν γαστρὶ ἔξει, καὶ τέξεται υἱόν, καὶ καλέσουσι τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἐμμανουήλ (Matthew i. 23); συλλέγουσι and τρυγῶσι in Luke vi. 44; εἶπε δὲ αὐτῷ

ὁ Θεός· Ἐφρων, ταύτη τῇ νυκτὶ τὴν ψυχὴν σου ἀπαιτοῦσιν ἀπὸ σου (Luke xii. 20)—further examples could easily be multiplied.

A noticeable feature of the Greek of the Gospels is its constant use of analytic verb-forms, as in such expressions as ὁ ἀνὴρ καθήμενός ἐστι, πεπιοικῶς ἐστιν, ἐρχόμενός ἐστιν, ἐρχόμενος ἔσται, and so on (cf. Acts v. 25; Luke v. 10). It is true that the tendency to use analytic forms increases in Greek from Homer down; but their extreme frequency in the Gospels is not only due to the native Greek tendency but is encouraged by the exceedingly wide use of the participle in Hebrew.

One of the most familiar expressions of the King James Version of the Gospels is the constantly recurring 'and it came to pass that . . .', a phrase that everyone has heard so often in the Sunday lessons that it seems like normal English idiom, if a trifle old-fashioned; originally it was no more normal English than καὶ ἐγένετο . . . (καί) . . . is normal Greek idiom, for both represent the recurrent *wayyehi* . . . *we* . . . of Hebrew. The construction appears on every other page of Luke: cf. i. 5, 8; ii. 1, 15; iii. 21; v. 1, &c.

The jussive future is doubtless a genuine Hebraism. Although not unknown in Attic Greek, it is there only a weak imperative; in Hebrew and Aramaic, however, the jussive is *the* imperative: in the Gospels the jussive future appears to be used now and then in the Semitic manner, with no weakening of the imperative force, as in Matthew v. 48 (ἔσεσθε οὖν ὑμεῖς τελεῖοι); vi. 5 (οὐκ ἔσεσθε ὡς οἱ ὑποκριταί).

8. We may now note a few expressions which illustrate Semitic influence on vocabulary: ἀνέστη μετὰ (with the genitive, Matthew xii. 41) is a direct translation of the Aramaic phrase *qam (ng'im)*, 'he rose up with', i.e. 'he disputed with': the phrase has ceased to be Aramaic, but has not yet become Greek. In Matthew iii. 10 occurs the odd phrase καρπὸν ποιεῖν, 'to yield fruit': ποιεῖν represents the Hebrew (*ng*)*asah* (not found in Aramaic) 'to make; to produce, yield'. 'Debt' in the Lord's Prayer, as has long been admitted, means 'sin': the Greek ὀφείλημα (cf. also ὀφειλέτης and ὀφείλειν) represents the Aramaic word *hobha*, 'debt; sin' (cf. Aramaic *hayyabha*, 'debtor; sinner'). The use of εἰς with the accusative after εἶναι or γενέσθαι is pure Hebrew, not Greek at all, translating as it does the Semitic preposition *le*: cf. Luke xiii. 19 (ἐγένετο εἰς δένδρον) and John xvi. 20 (ἡ λυτὴ ὑμῶν εἰς χαρὰν γενήσεται). So μετὰ with the genitive meaning 'in dealing with' simply translates with wooden literalness the Hebrew (*ng*)*im*: cf. Luke x. 36 (ὁ ποιήσας τὸ ἔλεος μετ' αὐτοῦ) and Acts xiv. 27. Where Greek and other languages use a neuter pronoun (τοῦτο, ἐκεῖνο) Hebrew uses the feminine (*zo'th*, *hi*): this appears in Mark xii. 11 and in Matthew xxi.



42, where both writers are quoting from Psalm xcvi. 23, so that the Hebraism is even more to be expected.

At this point the reader may wish to know the original form of those actual Aramaic words which, rather roughly transliterated into Greek letters, appear in the New Testament; exclusive of proper names, these are 'abba' (father, Mark xiv. 36 ἄββᾱ), *beyth hesda'* (house of grace, John v. 2 βηθεσδά), *gabb' tha'* (hill, John xix. 13 γαββαθᾱ), *gulgaltā'* (skull, Matthew xxvii. 34 γολγοθᾱ), 'eth'phattah (be opened! Mark vii. 34 ἐφφαθᾱ), *keypha'* (rock, cliff, John i. 42 κηφᾱς), *l'ghyon* (the Latin word *legio*! Mark v. 9 λεγεών), *mamona'* (money, Mark vi. 24 μαμωνᾱς), *m'shiha'* (anointed one, John i. 41 μεσσίας), *satana'* (opponent, Matthew iv. 10 σατανᾱς), *sikhra'* (intoxicating drink, Luke i. 15 σικερα), *tabhy' tha'* (gazelle, Acts ix. 36 ταβιθᾱ), along with three others (ῥαββονί, Mark x. 51; βοανεργῆς, iii. 17; ῥακά, Matthew v. 22) of which the original Aramaic form is doubtful. The correct Aramaic for Jesus' words on the cross is 'elohi, 'elohi, l'ma' sh'bhaqtani? (My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?), an Aramaized quotation from Psalm xxii. 2: 'eli, 'eli, lamah (ng)azabhtani? The Aramaic original of 1 Corinthians xvi. 22 is *marana' 'atha'*; that of Mark v. 41 is very uncertain.

A far more difficult subject is the extent to which the parallelism characteristic of all Semitic poetry has affected the diction of the Gospels. The reader should examine the analysis of Hebrew parallelism in S. R. Driver's *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (co-ordinate parallelism, antithetical parallelism, progressive parallelism, &c.), and then ask himself whether Mark i. 8 is influenced by the Hebrew form:

I indeed baptized you with water,  
But he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

Compare also Matthew iii. 12:

Whose fan is in his hand,  
And he will thoroughly purge his floor,  
And gather his wheat into the garner;  
But he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

These passages sound like literal translations of traditional sayings of John the Baptist, retaining their original balance of form when transplanted into Greek. Once we go beyond simple examples such as these, however, difficulties come thick and fast.

A word, at least, should be added on the difference between the Hebraistic Greek of the Septuagint and that of the Gospels. The Greek of the Old Testament, Greek such as never was heard on land or sea,

follows the Hebrew original with such painfully conscientious fidelity that only the vocabulary has changed: it is, in fact, Hebrew masquerading as Greek. Indeed, particularly in the version of the Psalms and of Isaiah, there are actually passages which are sheer gibberish. Certainly it was not the Greek spoken at Alexandria; as well maintain that Smith Minor's appalling hash of the *pro Milone* represents the English spoken in Vancouver. In the Gospels, on the other hand, we have a living language as written and spoken by Aramaic-speaking Jews; even the Gospel of Mark, the most strongly Hebraistic of all, is to this extent written in real Greek.

### CHOICE OF A SUPREME COMMANDER

The following passage is taken from the opening chapter of Onosander's *Στρατηγικός*, composed in the Principate of Claudius.

Φημὶ τοίνυν αἰρεῖσθαι τὸν στρατηγὸν οὐ κατὰ γένη κρίνοντας ὥσπερ τοὺς ἱερέας, οὐδὲ κατ' οὐσίας ὡς τοὺς γυμνασιάρχους, ἀλλὰ σὼφρονα, ἐγκρατῆ, νήπτην, λιτόν, διάπονον, νοερόν, ἀφιλάργυρον, μήτε νέον μήτε πρεσβύτερον, ἂν τύχη καὶ πατέρα παίδων, ἱκανὸν λέγειν, ἔνδοξον. Σὼφρονα μὲν, ἵνα μὴ ταῖς φυσικαῖς ἀνθελκόμενος ἡδοναῖς ἀπολείπη τὴν ὑπὲρ τῶν μεγίστων φροντίδα. Ἐγκρατῇ δέ, ἐπειδὴ τηλικαύτης ἀρχῆς μέλλει τυγχάνειν, αἱ γὰρ ἀκρατεῖς ὁρμαὶ προσλαβοῦσαι τὴν τοῦ δύνασθαι τι ποιεῖν ἐξουσίαν ἀκατάσχετοι γίνονται πρὸς τὰς ἐπιθυμίας. Νήπτην δ', ὅπως ἐπαγρυπνῇ ταῖς μεγάλαις πράξεσιν, ἐν νυκτὶ γὰρ ὡς τὰ πολλὰ ψυχῆς ἡρεμούσης στρατηγοῦ γνῶμη τελειοῦται. Λιτόν δέ, ἐπειδὴ κατασκελετεύουσιν αἱ πολυτελεῖς θεραπείαι δαπανῶσαι χρόνον ἄπρακτον εἰς τὴν τῶν ἡγουμένων τρυφήν. Διάπονον δ', ἵνα μὴ πρῶτος τῶν στρατευομένων, ἀλλ' ὕστατος κάμνη. Νοερόν δέ, ὅξυν γὰρ εἶναι δεῖ τὸν στρατηγὸν ἐπὶ πᾶν ἄττοντα δι' ὠκύτητος ψυχῆς κατὰ τὸν Ὅμηρον

ῶσει πτερόν ἢ νόημα·

πολλάκις γὰρ ἀπρόληπτοι ταραχαὶ προσπесоῦσαι σχεδιάζειν ἀναγκάζουσι τὸ συμφέρον. . . .



## ROMAN LITERATURE AFTER THE GRACCHI<sup>1</sup>

By R. E. SMITH

THE Gracchi in literature as in all else mark a turning-point in Roman history; they brought one epoch to a close and inaugurated a fresh one; and by their choice of means to effect their end they unwittingly determined the direction of events for the following century. In order to be able to appreciate the literature as a reflection and a phenomenon of its society, we must first briefly consider the effects of the Gracchi upon political life, and then the effects of that political life upon Roman society. The Gracchi set out to solve certain problems; but owing to the twist that they gave to Roman history, those problems fell into the background, to be supplanted by a problem of politics which absorbed all the energies of the governing class to the exclusion of the problems which should have been their main concern and responsibility.

The problems that confronted the State at the time of the Gracchi were many; they were social, economic, political, and administrative problems of vast complexity that required wisdom, patience, and, above all, goodwill for their solution. By this time real political power was wielded by a comparatively small number of families, grouped round leading men; they had come to believe that they governed by divine right, and while the better among them were aware of their responsibilities, there were many to whom the emoluments of government were reason enough for restricting the profits of empire among the smallest number. During the second century the attitude of the governing class had become conservative, opposed to any change which might alter the existing organization or deprive them of some of their great power. Such a mentality tends to oppose all change, whether good or bad, whether it affects them or not. Any attempt, therefore, to deal with the problems of the State was likely to meet with opposition; and since magistracies were annual, the Senate had only to obstruct for a year. A would-be reformer must either overcome or override senatorial opposition if he were to succeed. But either course would create an ugly precedent, whose consequences might be dangerous to the Republic and must be damaging to the aristocracy. Here, then, was the dilemma:

<sup>1</sup> This article is based on a paper read to the Classical Association of New South Wales in October 1949.

to effect what was thought to be necessary reform without damaging the Republican form of government. Laelius withdrew his projects for reform<sup>1</sup> to avoid doing damage; the Gracchi overrode the Senate and thus by their violent impatience destroyed the Republic.

At first the Senate seemed to have beaten off the Gracchan assaults successfully, and, moreover, to have forged for themselves a weapon with which to rebut any fresh attack. But precedent remains and cannot be undone. Further, the manner of their victory had created among the Gracchan supporters a feeling of bitterness which turned the zeal for social and economic reform into a zeal for political reform, i.e. a zeal to overthrow the senatorial monopoly of government and privilege. The opposition to the Senate which grew during these years, whose adherents came to be known as *Populares*, was primarily concerned with attacks on the governing class and their exclusiveness; it consisted of ambitious individuals whose only bond was a determination to reach the highest offices and satisfy their ambition. Necessary reforms were forgotten except as election baits. Yet the machinery of government was undoubtedly inefficient and inadequate to deal with Rome's complex imperial responsibilities; reforms in the executive and administrative branches were necessary. To this problem the nobles might have addressed themselves, but when they were constantly being attacked, it was impossible that they should take a broad, statesmanlike view rather than a narrow, self-interested one; while the solutions forced upon the State by the *Populares* dealt only with particular problems, and then only by trampling down the constitution and raising some individual to an un-Republican position.

The Jugurthine War and the Gallic troubles gave the *Populares* their first chance.<sup>2</sup> There was certainly some incompetent generalship, some money probably changed hands, but these were not sufficient reasons for extreme measures; yet for the *Populares* it was an opportunity to attack the Government, who were forced therefore to defend themselves. The result was disastrous to good government: for if an irresponsible assembly were to take upon itself the appointment of generals, then Rome's future would be dangerous; if, however, the governing class were to appoint men to commands for reasons of birth rather than of ability, then again Rome's future would be dangerous. Yet such

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch, *Tib. Gracch.* 8. 4.

<sup>2</sup> For a defence of the Senate's behaviour in this war, see De Sanctis, *Problemi di Storia Antica*, pp. 187 ff., who shows good reason for supposing that the *Populares* and the *Equites* forced the Senate to embark on a major war which was not in Rome's best interests. Cf. *C.A.H.* ix, pp. 131 ff. (Last).



was the bitterness engendered because of the Gracchi that this was just what would happen. The Populares, having forced the Senate to fight a war of their choice, having installed their general to command, and having kept him in unbroken command, felt sufficiently strong to make further attacks on the Senate; not content with bringing Rome's enemy to Rome to give evidence against Romans, they instituted the Mamilian inquiry, gave a new meaning to *maiestas*,<sup>1</sup> intruded themselves into the priesthood, where so much political power lay, and almost brought about a revolution in the year 100. Against this dangerous mob government the Senate could do nothing; if the people chose to challenge their *auctoritas*, they could do so successfully. The Senate's apparent victory in 100 was as deceptive as that of 122. Marius inaugurated the age of great men who with the support of the people could, through the use of the tribunate, be masters of Rome.

It was too much to suppose that after the challenge of Marius and the Populares the nobles should try to put their house in order so that there should be neither place nor need for a second Marius. They could hardly be expected to take into partnership those whose every effort had been directed to humiliating and despoiling them, and in consequence the next year went by without any attempt to solve the problem. The problem of the Italians was solved forcibly, having been lost sight of in the seemingly more pressing problem of who was to govern Rome. Sulla's march on Rome was the next step, but the Government was, and continued, powerless the moment Sulla's back was turned, and when as Dictator he tried to re-establish senatorial government his attempt lasted just as long as he was there to see it carried out. He could not undo the past, nor could he induce a loyalty to a government which represented one of the contending factions of thirty years. The habit of turning to the people to satisfy personal ambition could not be cured; it could only be checked by superior power. Loyalty was not to be found in Rome, responsibility only in a few, as Sulla's death quickly showed. Lepidus' and Sertorius' revolts, Pompey's unconstitutional rise to power, and his special commands all flattered his vanity and reduced the life of the Republic. And the senatorial reaction was the same: they thwarted Pompey when and where they could, thus driving him into the arms of the Populares. Caesar's consulship and the succeeding decade merely proved the impossibility by this time of orderly, responsible government within the existing framework.

In such an atmosphere loyalty to the State was hardly to be found.

<sup>1</sup> The *Lex Apuleia* of 103 (?) seems to have been primarily aimed at Servilius Caepio and Mallius, who had been defeated at Arausio in 105.

Loyalty must be to an ideal, as representing the aims and aspirations of the State. But for long Rome had stood for no ideal; no high aims had infused the politics of the Government; whenever the chance for constructive work had been presented, it had been deliberately cast aside for political reasons. The provinces were regarded as sources of wealth which was to be extracted by any means by their governors; their inhabitants were regarded with contempt, their welfare and progress never considered. The provinces could hardly, therefore, be expected to feel a sense of loyalty to Rome.<sup>1</sup> And Italy was little better; the Italians had fought their way to citizenship, yet the citizenship in the absence of representative government gave them little political power; it may be said that they were not masters of their destiny, and those who were had little interest in their fate.<sup>2</sup> They were unlikely, therefore, to feel a sense of loyalty to a State from which they had had to wring whatever concessions they had won, nor could they hope to feel that they were marching side by side with Rome for some great cause, however dimly expressed.

This lack of idealism, a spiritual lack expressing itself in selfish materialism, marked every aspect of life. Loyalty was lacking even within Rome itself; when the nobles themselves disobeyed the Senate's orders, it is no cause for surprise that soldiers found their only object of loyalty in their general. The law courts were filled with prosecutions for extortion or misconduct in the provinces; the object, however, was not to cleanse public life, but to win political victories. The wrangle between the Senate and Equites for control of the law courts was a dismal spectacle to present to the provinces, not likely to win their enthusiastic support. In all Rome's civil wars of this period there is a significant absence of a cause; they were all for power and what went with it; only at the end with Octavian was some positive cause found in the struggle of East *v.* West, and then it served to rally the whole of Italy, becoming a dominant theme in early Augustan literature. In such circumstances Caelius' policy of supporting the right until it came to blows, and then supporting the stronger was reasonable enough.<sup>3</sup> Caesar's defence of his conduct<sup>4</sup> is instructive in this connexion; he is trying to justify his conduct, yet the whole gist of his defence is that his *existimatio* and *dignitas* had been affronted; that his *dignitas* had always been to him *vita potior*; that he had made many sacrifices *rei publicae causa*; and that if the Republic would do as he asked, he would

<sup>1</sup> As was shown by the massacre which opened the Mithradatic War in 88.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Momigliano in *J.R.S.* 1904, pp. 79-80.

<sup>3</sup> *Ad Fam.* 8. 14. 3.

<sup>4</sup> *Bell. Civ.* 1. 7-9.



readily concede what the Republic asked of him. Caesar obviously thought that this defence would persuade many—and he proved right; yet a sober examination reveals nothing but a selfish determination to do what he wanted, regardless of consequences to the State. And so little did the Republic by now mean to most persons that they readily accepted such propaganda. Respect for the traditions and institutions of the Republic was gone; they were merely the background and the tools for selfish purposes. Such was the final result of a century of political unrest begun by the Gracchi. It is no accident that the ideal of Rome and its destiny are forgotten themes until Virgil once more restated them, for with Virgil had come back the age of responsibility, of faith and hope, as had been the age of Ennius.

The *plebs urbana* played an increasingly important part in the political life of Rome, for with them lay the power to confer power, and the Gracchi by their direct appeal to the people had created the precedent which was followed throughout the next century. The *plebs* was an amalgam of all nations and creeds, many of whom had come to Italy as slaves, others had drifted hopelessly to Rome through lack of work at home, united only in knowing and caring nothing for the Roman way of life; yet they became the masters of Rome and were able to give their undivided attention to government, which generally consisted in supporting the man who offered the heaviest bribe. Statesmanship on these terms became impossible; it is significant that every attempt at statesmanlike legislation was perforce accompanied by some bribe to the electorate. The solution to the problem of the mob turned out eventually to be the removal of all power from them; but that in the Republic was impossible. Attempts to place them in agrarian colonies, if possible in the time of the Gracchi before the demoralization had set in so deeply, were impossible later on, when no man willingly worked. Even Cicero only dared to suggest that they should be free to show their vote, hoping that this would encourage them to commend themselves to 'good' men;<sup>1</sup> a strange delusion in one who had lived through his experiences.<sup>2</sup>

The breakdown of Roman society was reflected in its religion and the substitutes that men found for it. Religion had played an important part in the early life of the community, and had entered into its public life and government. But its formal, impersonal qualities had prevented it from becoming a man's personal religion, which could satisfy his spiritual needs. By the second century the educated classes had begun

<sup>1</sup> *De Leg.* 3. 15. 33–17. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Ad Quint. Frat.* 2. 3. 2–3, for a description of a typical piece of hooliganism.

to turn to philosophy, and Stoicism as moulded by Panaetius for Roman purposes had for a time become a substitute for religion, as long as it was felt to be an expression of Rome's ideal; as the gulf between the two grew wider, it became a man's private way of life, having less and less connexion with life in society. The Roman religion had even in the second century come to be regarded as a politically useful weapon;<sup>1</sup> by the first century its main function had come to be as a means, largely in the hands of the nobles, for balking unpleasant legislation or keeping an unwanted candidate out of office. The Populares were well aware of its political implications; their successful demand in 105 to be admitted to the priesthoods was not due to a sudden surge of piety; and when Clodius took away the right of *obnuntiatio* in the case of legislation,<sup>2</sup> it was not to relieve Jupiter of a tiresome responsibility. The close connexion of religion with political power meant that it was bound to suffer during the struggle, and through its lack of spiritual content it was not likely to have many defenders.

Oriental religions had first entered Rome during the third century, but during the second and first centuries they increased in numbers and adherents. Against them the Senate became increasingly unable to take effective action, because it had no alternative to offer, and further because they were the religion of so many so-called Romans who had absorbed little of Romanism beside the name. Many Romans of birth found in these religions what they could not find in Roman religion. Superstition grew: both Marius and Sulla believed in fortune-tellers, Nigidius Figulus with his horoscopes and other magical powers enjoyed a reputation which reflects the credulousness of the time.

All these manifestations of a non-material need that was not met by anything Roman were unhealthy; religion and the ethos of society must go together; society and religion, as Augustus rightly saw, must be in harmony, if one's society is to win one's loyalty. But when men bring in their own religion or turn to alien ones, and the spirit of those religions is antagonistic to the spirit of society, it is society that loses the fight. It was at once a symptom and a cause of society's failure that these foreign religions with their un-Roman practices grew constantly in popularity, for the emphasis in these religions was on the individual, who was to seek his personal salvation according to the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the opposition to C. Gracchus' proposed colony at Carthage on the ground that wolves had torn up the boundary stones (Appian, *B.C.* 1. 24. 106), although there were no wolves in those parts, and the story was merely invented to thwart the proposal.

<sup>2</sup> In the year 58.



particular prescription by some private act; society was unnecessary and had no place in them.

Epicureanism became increasingly popular during this century among the educated class; and it was an Epicureanism that became increasingly selfish and individualistic—understandably, in the growing chaos of the dying Republic. Its counsel was to take no part in public life; its ἀταραξία became degraded to allow of pleasures of the appetites; according to a man's disposition it seemed to sanction and sanctify his every whim. Stoicism, too, no longer possessed of a positive faith, turned out only able to help a man to be a slave or die with resignation. There is a certain hopelessness about it, an inevitability; no suggestion that things could be changed for the better; *Fatum* rules all. Only when it was combined with a positive faith, as in Virgil, could the concept of *Fatum* have a religious value.

The gradual disintegration of society with its accompanying selfishness and lack of idealism was bound to affect the world of letters. We must remember that the literature of this period is the expression of a selfish, disillusioned, ever more pessimistic society, which, having no social or spiritual moorings, expressed itself individualistically, and reflects the spirit of Rome only in the sense that there is no unifying principle infusing it.

By the time of the Gracchi the first vein of literature had been worked out; it was the artificial product of a politically mature but culturally backward people who, having come into contact with a civilization far more developed than their own, borrowed both form and ideas from Greece. The tragedies and comedies, having no roots in Rome, being alien to Rome and dealing with an alien civilization, failed to maintain themselves; nor did the attempts to Romanize them succeed in making them palatable; they still remained Greek, with a superficial Roman colouring. They made way for the more truly Italian forms of Atellan farce and mime. The one original form of composition, the satire, was born about the time of the Gracchi; it was symbolical, in that it turned completely away from the impersonal spirit of drama and epic to the personal criticism and observation of the author. Then there set in a period of self-conscious reflection, during which men became interested in the Latin tongue, whose development had been fostered by the artificial literature of the second century; by the time of Accius and Lucilius the Latin tongue was becoming an object of study—its pronunciation, spelling, and philology. Now was laid the foundation of that literary Latin which became the medium of literary expression for centuries. The spirit of Alexandrian scholarship, too, was felt in Rome

at this time, and continued to attract scholars throughout the period, not least among them the extraordinary and versatile Varro.

On the whole, however, the period between the Gracchi and Sulla was as barren of literary as of political achievement. Three pieces of legislation are worth noting: first, a law passed in 115, banning from Rome all shows except the Latin flute-player accompanying a singer and the dance where the ankles were covered.<sup>1</sup> The legislation—which failed of its purpose—seems to have been aimed at a growing licentiousness on the stage, presumably introduced to hold the dwindling audiences. The second law, which officially admitted gladiatorial shows to Rome,<sup>2</sup> is, as it were, the obverse of the first: the cruel and crude taste of the mob must be pandered to; the governing class can no longer properly control the ethos of Rome. The third law is interesting as showing the extent to which politics dominated all spheres of life; by it Latin rhetors were expelled from Rome.<sup>3</sup> For this there was a twofold reason: first and immediate, to remove from Rome a certain Plotius Gallus, a strong supporter of Marius; secondly, to deny the *Populares* the opportunity of learning effective public speaking, since many of the *Populares*, being ignorant of Greek, were unable to profit from the teaching in Greek, which was allowed to continue.

The barrenness of this period is no doubt partly explicable by the growing unpopularity of the Italians at Rome and the rapidly increasing bitterness between Rome and her allies.<sup>4</sup> But there was also the problem of finding some source of literary inspiration, and of using literature as a means of self-expression. The increasing acrimony of political life was the father of one form, autobiography. Such works were written by men who had been in the midst of political life, and hence were the objects of bitter attack; their writings were a defence of their conduct and policy. The lowering standards of behaviour gave birth to attacks on political foes, of which we have but an imperfect knowledge, but of whose scope and extent there is no doubt. Among memoir writers we have Catulus, Rufus, and Sulla; we also have notices of attacks on Caesar by the elder Curio, of the *Trikaranos* of Varro, of Catos and anti-Catos, of eulogists of Pompey, of writings by Lucullus; and the list could be extended. These personal attacks, which developed with

<sup>1</sup> Cassiodorus, *Chron.* ii, p. 131, 639: 'Censores artem ludicram ex urbe removerunt praeter latinum tibicinem cum cantore et ludum talarium.' The Latin flute-player was considered less licentious.

<sup>2</sup> Ennodius, *Paneg. dictus Theod.* 85. Hitherto gladiatorial shows had been part of funeral games; now they were given purely for entertainment.

<sup>3</sup> Suet. *Rhet.* 1.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Bickel, *Gesch. der Röm. Lit.*, pp. 123-4.

the growing bitterness and demoralization of public life, were but another aspect of the never-ending stream of prosecutions which glutted the courts.

In poetry the period down to Sulla, if barren in performance, was fertile in conception. A fresh start had to be made in poetry, and there was nothing in Rome's literature to give guidance. Drama had lost its popularity, and was in any case not a medium of self-expression; epic is the product of a great mind and a great situation, both of which were absent in this period; occasional poetry had as yet no roots in Rome. It was to Lutatius Catulus and his circle that Rome owed its first interest in Hellenistic poetry, which was to have such a profound influence on her own poetry. In the second century Rome had instinctively felt herself attracted to the literature of classical Greece, which had been the literature of a society.<sup>1</sup> But Hellenistic literature was the self-conscious product of a people for whom the city-state no longer existed. The Greek spirit at once felt the change, and both in literature and philosophy turned in on itself; both became personal, individual concerns, not expressions of a society. For this same reason the spirit of Alexandrian poetry began to appeal to Rome, which in the incipient disintegration of society was losing its attractive force as the symbol combining all men's spiritual needs.<sup>2</sup> Catulus and his circle began writing poetry after Alexandrian models, imitating and translating poems by Callimachus, Sappho, and others. In itself this poetry was of no great value; its value lay in the interest it engendered in this new form of literature, which was so well suited to their spiritual state. To this circle were attracted some of the leading Greek literary figures, such as Archias and Antipater, whose encouragement helped to produce the works of Laevius and of Catulus himself. These poems were in the nature of experimental poetry, the outcome not so much of poetic inspiration as of interest in literature and a desire to experiment with new literary forms. They were the precursors of the νεώτεροι.

With the νεώτεροι we come to the age of successful experiment and poetry; its chief exponents were from the north of Italy, and they brought with them an un-Roman attitude to literature,<sup>3</sup> a subjectivity which did not shrink from revealing its feelings and emotions. For them the short poems of the elegy, epigram, lyric, epyllion were the ideal

<sup>1</sup> This aspect of Roman literature is well brought out by Rostagni, *La Letteratura di Roma Republicanica ed Augustea*.

<sup>2</sup> Though the comparison is a fair one, it should be borne in mind that there was in spite of everything a vigour and robustness about Rome that was absent from Alexandria.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Garrod, *Oxford Book of Latin Verse*, introd., pp. xvi ff.



forms; they despised the archaic literature of Rome as uncouth and unsuited to their age. As to its unsuitability they were right, because theirs was not an age for social literature; but while it expressed its age in its individualism, their work was none the less somehow un-Roman. Cicero, who revived the old Roman tradition, remarks that were his life to be twice as long, he still would not have time to read the lyric poets; and the succeeding age, though its chief writers had been brought up on the Hellenistic diet, none the less turned away from the νεώτεροι. But by then literature was once again the function of society, not of the individual. The νεώτεροι worked for and by themselves, flattering each other's latest compositions, particularly when they were carefully composed artificial works closely imitating or translating Hellenistic models. They set their own canons and awarded praise accordingly; and it was probably on these artificial and often lifeless products that they flattered themselves their reputation would hang, rather than on the truly personal expressions of their feelings and emotions. The failure of society is clearly seen in these poets; unable to find inspiration in the society of their day, they turned like the Alexandrians to the study.

Lucretius is a strange, lonely figure, a man of burning faith, but a faith not drawn from the ideals of Rome. He has the zeal of a missionary with a message of which he thinks the world stands in need. But it is not a social message; it is an elaborate attempt to prove that there is nothing after death, that men should therefore not be afraid of death, but should aim to live a life such as the Epicurean gods live, without worry or care. It is, in fact, a most anti-social message, an exhortation to have nothing to do with public life. He attributes men's worries to ambition; true, perhaps; but he cannot give men some positive ideal which should inspire them to take part in public life. Both his fervour and his solution are symptoms of his time—a selfish withdrawal, to leave others to maintain the framework of society, behind which the Epicurean can selfishly live his anti-social life. Such a poem could not have been written in the second century, when, in fact, Epicureanism was officially frowned upon. But now it seemed the answer to those who were disgusted with life at Rome. Neither Epicureanism nor Lucretius could give a forward direction to life; as in the days of its birth, its advice was to leave the world to look after itself; and Lucretius' poem preaching this conduct is a product of his unhappy times. Virgil significantly could not go along with Lucretius, as Horace could not with the νεώτεροι; in both cases because a society with faith has nothing in common with a faithless society. Virgil and Horace were in harmony

with their society, as the others were not; the harmony inspired the one group as antagonism the other.

The age was rich in prose-writing, during which there was a rapid development of both language and style. The development of the literary language we have already referred to, and the interest in the proper use of words continued throughout the century. Sentence structure under Greek influence made great advances; its development between Cato and Cicero represents among other things a development in thought and theorizing which called for greater flexibility of language and structure for purposes of expression. The continuing influence of Greek literature and culture together with the growing maturity of Latin letters combined to produce a spirit of self-conscious independence, which expressed itself in challenging comparisons between Rome and Greece, such as those made by Cicero in the *Tusculan Disputations*,<sup>1</sup> or by Nepos in his *Lives*.<sup>2</sup>

There is a sentiment common to many of the prose-writers of this age which is directly attributable to the disjointed times. This consists of an idealization of their own past, a reflection into the past of those qualities which they found so conspicuously lacking in the present, combined with a naïve belief that their salvation lay in returning to the simpler habits of the past, which had been corrupted by the growing luxury and contamination with foreign ways. The fact that a higher and more cultured standard of living is not necessarily vicious, and that a life lived in a hovel without books is not by definition virtuous,<sup>3</sup> was one of those simple truths which philosophy successfully obscured for the ancient world. Philosophy in this way prevented the ancient world from ever coming to grips with its real problems; what was not in itself evil was pronounced to be evil; and philosophy then with an over-naïve psychological understanding suggested remedies which failed to take account of human nature as it is; the result was a series of futile sumptuary laws, laws on corruption, agrarian reform, &c., which sought to put the clock back to the legendary past. The world should be static, but was frequently retrogressive; the legislator's aim should therefore be to restore the *status quo*.

This attitude meets us frequently in the literature of this period; it dominates Sallust's interpretation of the Jugurthine War and the

<sup>1</sup> *Tusc.* I. 1 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Hannibal* 13. 4; the object of the *Lives* was the comparison of Roman with foreign—chiefly Greek—men of action, in order that Romans might see that they had produced men as distinguished as other nations.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Last in *J.R.S.*, 1944, p. 117.

Catilinarian Conspiracy; Cicero is constantly harking back to an idealized second century in his writings; aware that something is essentially wrong with the society of his day, he can only suppose a decline from an ideal past.

The temper of all literature of this period is in this respect in marked contrast to that of the second century; imperfect though that age was, yet it was a cohesive society, and its members were proud of it. There is a strain of satisfaction which is wholly lacking in the first century, which is marked in contrast by strong dissatisfaction and a pathetic ignorance of its true causes. The spiritual aspect of the problem escaped everyone. Varro, the great antiquarian, well illustrates this weakness; in his work on Roman antiquities he aimed to halt the decay of religion and to restore it to its rightful place in Roman life, and for this purpose all his vast erudition and Hellenistic scholarship was brought into service. Cicero complimented him on having familiarized his generation with the Roman religion which had become a stranger among them;<sup>1</sup> yet Cicero's attitude towards the traditional religion was such that he looked to philosophy as his own spiritual guide. Surely Varro could see that the Roman people still had an appetite for religion, but not for the formal, unspiritual Roman religion, and that if he could not endow it with some spiritual content, he must substitute for it something that had. Both he and Cicero seemed to think that if some of the reverence which surrounds a rare museum piece could be imparted to this religion, something positive would have been achieved. This same spirit is discernible in other works of Varro's; his semi-philosophical works and his satires, so far as the miserable fragments allow of a judgement, seem to have had a similar purpose, his essays being moral themes in an historical setting, and some at least of his satires containing attacks on the decadence, luxury, and immorality of the day, with which is contrasted the simpler virtue of the past and even of Varro's own early days. Through all there seems to run the exhortation to return to the better past which his deluded imagination has conjured up. His work on the life of the Roman people, in which were described the manners, customs, and social life of the Romans, seems to have aimed at inspiring the Romans with a respect for their own way of life, and thus draw them back to it. Yet all this, as all Cicero's nostalgic writing in the same vein, was powerless to make a living society out of the disintegrated fragments of the Republic. The present was a failure; but the solution was not to substitute the past.

The conflict that raged during these years with respect to oratorical

<sup>1</sup> *Acad. Post.* 1. 3. 9.



and literary style further illustrates this lack of unity and singleness of purpose. An age that is at one with itself will instinctively find a harmonious means of expression; and while writers may express themselves in different styles, their works will be a harmony, reflecting the inner harmony of the writer. The experimentation that went on at Rome was a sign that they were somehow dissatisfied and were trying to make an adjustment between society and themselves in their mode of expression; and the individualism which was its result may remind us of modern art. The florid vulgarity of Hortensius revealed if nothing else the essential lack of taste at Rome, and the intruding presence of the *plebs* as an element to be pandered to. It fell before the greater charm of Cicero's more moderate Rhodianism, and with this great stylist the Latin language seemed to find its perfect form of expression. There is a harmony in Cicero's style and writing, for Cicero was spiritually of the second century, and found there the sources of his inspiration. It is the harmony of the past he would so dearly love to bring back to life, and his style catches much of the aristocratic dignity and *gravitas* which belonged to that age, and which was so alien to his own generation.

It was natural that, as the chaos grew greater, Ciceronianism in its turn should seem tasteless, and that men should seek for some style more in tune with their times. The greater importance of the *plebs* in Roman life demanded simplicity in speaking; there was neither the time nor the understanding for well-rounded periods, which many of those who addressed meetings could not in any case have composed.<sup>1</sup> The Attic style, which represented the educated answer to the demand for simplicity, became therefore the successor to Ciceronianism; its austerity, its rigorous standards of accuracy and care were in startling contrast to the general tone of society, and showed at least that the malaise which had come upon society was spiritual, and that the Romans were not just degenerate debauchees. Atticism and degeneracy do not go together, and its adoption was a welcome sign that Rome was intellectually vigorous if it could but find the proper spiritual environment.

In Sallust we have the individual striving to be different. He deliberately tries to give a certain flavour to his work by the adoption of archaic words, as though by mimicking the vocabulary of the elder Cato he were showing respect for his antique virtue and revolting against the modern degeneracy; his attempt to recapture in his style

<sup>1</sup> We may compare the change in English parliamentary eloquence between 1910 and 1930.

something of Thucydides serves merely to bring out the incomparable quality of the latter. Undoubtedly Sallust's style has many commendable features, but it is not the expression of a deep mind and personality, as is Thucydides'; it is the reflection of a mind trying to be different, to arrest attention. The contrast between Thucydides' incisive inquiry into the psychological and moral causes of events and Sallust's rather superficial understanding—or rather misunderstanding—of Roman history is a measure of their difference. It was typical that he should strive to be different in the hope of being mistaken for original.

There is much that is perforce left unsaid, much that is not touched upon, which is both cause and effect of the first century. The problem of the army, more particularly of its changing source of recruitment as the demands on it increased, the rapidly changing position of women and their growing influence on public life, the change of social customs between Scipio Aemilianus, who reported with pious horror that he had seen boys of good birth taught dancing, and the *jeunesse dorée* of Sallust's time, all this and much else is of importance; but in so far as they are not merely the change of custom and fashion which accompanies the development of any society, however well integrated, they are part of the terrible consequence of the Gracchan experiment with time, which by preventing an orderly evolution and compelling events to take the form of a bitter political struggle brought about the disintegration of Roman society. But for the Gracchi the Republic need not have come to an ignominious end, disgraced in the eyes of all and lamented only by the Stoic malcontents of the Empire.

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# TO THE WORLD'S END

By J. O. THOMSON

A RECURRENT motif in Latin poets is the assertion that somebody would follow somebody else anywhere, to the world's end if need be. This mannerism is worth notice for its curious persistence over a long period, and it is amusing to observe the details, the places which suggest themselves to the writers as dangerous or remote.

The series seems to begin with Catullus (11. 1-4): he has two cronies who will follow him wherever he goes, whether east to Parthia or Hyrcania and the Sacae beyond, or—presumably on another line, by sea—to the Arabs and the uttermost Indians,

litus ut longe resonante Eoa  
tunditur unda,

or south to the Nile, or north over the high Alps to the Rhine and the far-western Britons, just then being invaded by Julius Caesar. In fact the poet went east only to Bithynia, and nothing is known of journeys in other directions. (One scholar has even questioned whether he really came home all the way on his 'yacht', as poem 4 is generally understood to say.)<sup>1</sup>

Propertius is extravagant: with his friend he would scale the fabulous mountains of the north wind or go south to Ethiopia and beyond, whatever he may conceive to be there—

cum quo Rhipaeos possim conscendere montes  
ulteriusque domo vadere Memnonia.<sup>2</sup>

With his lady he would go *mare per longum* and endure anything (iii. 22. 9). A love-sick girl is made to write to her soldier, who is supposed to have seen the world from Britain and the wintry Getae to a generously large and elastic eastern frontier: if service regulations allowed, she would be with him, and Scythian mountains and frozen waters would not stop her: as it is, she can only look for his whereabouts on a map,

e tabula pictos ediscere mundos.

<sup>1</sup> C. Cichorius in *Festschrift Hirschfeld*, 1903, pp. 467-83 argues that he started by road (*pedes vigescunt*, 46. 8) by Prusa to Cyzicus, past Apollonia on its lake, where his host, a business man, owned the ship described, which had made several voyages from here and back to this *limpidum lacum*.

<sup>2</sup> i. 6. 3-4. Some keep *domos* . . . *Memnonias* and understand *ulterius* (*quam*).



The passage is of considerable value for the use of maps or *itineraria picta* at this time.<sup>1</sup>

Horace has friends who would go with him to the still unconquered Biscay tribes and the seething breakers of the Syrtes (*Odes* ii. 6. 1-4). He himself would cheerfully accompany his patron Maecenas over the inhospitable Caucasus or the Alps or to the farthest corner of the West (*Epodes* 1. 11): the danger would not be great, it seems (*Odes* i. 22. 1-8), as the good man is safe wherever he goes, to the Syrtes or Caucasus

vel quae loca fabulosus  
lambit Hydaspes.

The poet had had his adventures as a young officer of Brutus, but there is no evidence of any distant travels.

The lover, says Ovid (*Amores* i. 9. 9), will follow his mistress anywhere in any weather: with his beside him Ovid (*ibid.* ii. 16. 19-26) would gladly brave the perils of Ulysses, rounding Cape Malea and sailing past Scylla and Charybdis: he would even risk a chill on the windy Alps.<sup>2</sup> Later the poor man had to go quite far, to exile at Tomi, raided by shaggy barbarians from across the Danube, and cold enough, if hardly so arctic as he describes in his endless complaints.

Statius (*Silvae* iii. 2. 90-92) wishes he had followed a friend on service even to the unknown Indians and the Cimmerian darkness. The Emperor's secretary—who probably sat in an office at Rome—is credited with a wife who would accompany him north over Rhine and Danube and Sarmatian snows, or south through any heat, and would, if allowed, fight like an Amazon beside her husband and his master (*ibid.* v. 1. 127-34). The poet's own wife, who is upset by his wish to retire from Rome to Naples, would make less fuss if they had to go to the cold north or beyond the darkling waters of western Thule (meaning only to Britain) or to the unknown source of the Nile (*ibid.* iii. 5. 19-24).

It is a long jump in time to Claudian and his praises of the Vandal general who carried on his shoulders the fate of the Western Empire: Stilicho's admiring men would follow him anywhere: they would do stiff rowing in the icy Cronian Sea, or pursue a rebel from the Atlas to the torrid zone and the strange river Gir which some thought to be the upper Nile.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See my *History of Ancient Geography*, Cambridge, 1948, p. 332. Prop. iv (v). 3. 37.

<sup>2</sup> For ancient dislike of mountains see my *H.A.G.*, p. 320 and references: add H. Nissen, *Italische Landeskunde*, 1883, i, p. 276.

<sup>3</sup> *De Consulatu Stilichonis* i. 176-80, 248-53. See my *H.A.G.*, p. 359; for the Gir, *ibid.*, p. 270.

It would be surprising if the mannerism here discussed had no precedent in Greek writings, which have plenty of lovers and devoted friends and soldiers. Yet it is not easy to recall anything quite similar, even about Alexander's men, who actually went nearer the world's end than most. Zeus cares nothing for the anger of his spouse, and, if she should go off to the ends of the earth, he seems to imply that it would be a good riddance; but this is hardly the sort of sentiment that we are looking for.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Homer, *Iliad* viii. 477-83.

### BOOKS RECEIVED

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## BRIEF REVIEWS

(\* denotes that a book is specially recommended for school libraries; \*\* that it is suitable for advanced students only; † signifies a book for the non-Greek reader.)

### Literature

The substance of †\**The Greek Tragic Poets*<sup>1</sup> is preceded by some fifty pages devoted to the political, economic, and religious background of Athenian drama—a wise move, for the author intended his book to be a guide mainly for non-Greek readers. The rest is concerned with the life and work of the three great tragedians. All the extant plays of Aeschylus and Sophocles are described in outline; of Euripides five only (*Medea*, *Hippolytus*, *Bacchae*, *Heracles*, *Ion*), although general remarks are made on the others. What Lucas has to say on the delineation of character (particularly in the case of Aeschylus) and on the role of the chorus is most interesting. Essentially he says little that is new, but the narrative is vigorous, and the subject required a fresh interpretation anyway. His style is clear and easy, his arguments and criticisms moderate. There are notes (concise but useful), chronological tables, a brief bibliography, and an appendix dealing with a new papyrus fragment (a few lines on the Gyges-Candaules story). \**The Roman Stage*<sup>2</sup> not only traces the development of Latin drama (in all its manifestations) during and immediately after Republican times, but enters the controversies over its production. Generally Professor Beare relies on the internal evidence of the plays and fragments (unfortunately he does not always quote with full references), but he is prepared to argue the merits of *critica et exegetica*. On the problem of the five-act law, for instance, he spends some pages on the Nauplios puppet-show described by Hero Alexandrinus and claimed by some modern commentators as evidence of the division into five *actus*. His own conclusion is that performances were continuous, at least from Aeschylus to Terence. Fifty pages are devoted to appendixes where technical aspects of play-production are examined in greater detail. Altogether this is an entertaining and valuable book. Whether engaged in polemics (on *contaminatio*, for example) or lively description (chapter xxii), the author is lucid and pointed: no words are wasted. The illustrations are excellent, and there is a short but up-to-date bibliography. L. P. Wilkinson's book, \**Horace and his Lyric Poetry*,<sup>3</sup> is provocative, well written, clear. Not all his opinions will be everywhere applauded—the poet's character and to a greater extent his philosophy impress *alios aliter*, but always with fiery intensity. He respects Horace, sees in him something more than the fat, jovial, generous, and amoral epicurean. Although he admits change as the poet grew older, he does build up a picture that is reasonably consistent and probable. He is, moreover, fair to his opponents. The difficulties of translation are delicately touched on, and in the Epilogue he gives a short history of Horatiana to the present day. Probably most readers will find pleasure (and food for thought) above all in the chapter on the Horatian Ode. It is worth noting, by the way, that the author gives his own version of quoted passages (in nearly every case), for the sake of those who feel their Latin is rude or rusty. †\**Greek Poetry for Everyman*<sup>4</sup> is a monumental work, obviously a labour of love. From Homer to Joannes Barbucallus (perhaps fifteen centuries), with introductions and notes and a preface that sparkles with wit and humour. Those who have read and enjoyed Mr. Lucas's *Aphrodite* already know the dignity and fineness of his style; in this volume they will not be disappointed by his ventures in a wider field, though they will probably regret the absence of some great names (was not Sophocles a poet?). Another book well adapted to the needs of the general reader, written in a simple and direct manner, is \**Books and Readers in Ancient Greece and Rome*.<sup>5</sup> This second edition includes much

<sup>1</sup> D. W. Lucas. Cohen & West, Ltd., 1950. Pp. xii+253. 15s. net.

<sup>2</sup> W. Beare. Methuen, 1950. Pp. xi+292. 25s. net.

<sup>3</sup> L. P. Wilkinson. C.U.P., 1951. Pp. ix+185. 12s. 6d. net.

<sup>4</sup> F. L. Lucas. Dent, 1951. Pp. xxxiv+414. 16s. net.

<sup>5</sup> F. G. Kenyon. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1951. Pp. viii+136. 8s. 6d. net.



new information acquired from Egypt in recent years. Sir Frederic Kenyon describes how papyrus roll (which hardly consulted the reader's convenience) gave way to papyrus codex (especially popular with the early Christians) and how, from the fourth century A.D., vellum codex was supreme. The difficulties of textual criticism are exemplified, and it is possible that many readers will find in this little book the genesis of a real enthusiasm for palaeography. The appendix, containing numerous illustrative passages from Latin authors, is particularly useful for teachers. Finally, for those who cultivate Byron, I would recommend *Byron's Maid of Athens: her Family and Surroundings*.<sup>1</sup> But what a κατάλογος νεῶν—the footnotes are truly exhaustive.

### Greek History

It is almost incredible that Bury's *\*History of Greece*<sup>2</sup> costs so little. This third edition, thoroughly revised by Russell Meiggs, is a fine production in every way. Since 1913 much new material has become available and this has been incorporated in text and notes without disturbing the balance of the book as Bury himself envisaged it. †*\*Greek Historical Thought*<sup>3</sup> (from Homer to the Age of Heraclius) is, like Antony's face, 'strangely disharmonic'. Its effect on Everyman is hard to assess. As a whole the book seems to be somewhat arbitrary and vague. Why, for example, include the προοίμια of Theophylactus Simocatta, Menander the Guardsman, and Agathias of Myrrhina—admirable though they are in themselves—and then ignore everything else that they wrote? Why so much of Polybius and so comparatively little of Thucydides? Hippocrates, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Hesiod, and Homer are represented, but not Aristotle or Aristophanes. A passage of Marcus Aurelius on the consolations of philosophy is surely irrelevant. ἀρχὴ ἡμῶν παντός, but why devote no less than 100 pages to prefaces? The Art of History is confined to a mere 36 (including 17 on criticism). Generally the translation is good, but the title of the Herodotus excerpt on p. 162 is rather unfortunate and the 'transactional subject-matter' of p. 209 (see also p. 24) is hardly felicitous. Nor, for that matter, is the title of the book itself: if it refers to the thoughts of Greek historians some pruning must be done.

### Roman History

*\*\*The Origins and History of the Proconsular and the Proprietary Imperium to 27 B.C.*<sup>4</sup> is a useful book, carefully documented. It may be conveniently dealt with in two parts: in the first 99 pages the Roman promagistracy is traced from its beginnings; in the second half are fifteen appendixes listing all holders of *imperium* (i.e. as procos. or propr.) down to 198 and all provincial governors to 27 B.C.; in the sixteenth and last appendix is a record of all men referred to as στρατηγοὶ ἀνθύπατοι in Greek inscriptions. In all cases the ancient sources are fully quoted. Mrs. Jashemski concludes that the Principate, in so far as it represented a promagistracy, was not the outcome of civil war in the first century, but rather the result 'of a long and natural process of development'. Another book that historians will find most absorbing is *\*\*Libertas as a Political Idea at Rome during the Late Republic and Early Principate*.<sup>5</sup> It is well annotated, closely reasoned, and economical of words. Dr. Wirszubski has some interesting (and unusual) comments to make on 'republicam in libertatem vindicavi' and the famous coin of 28. In fact, his definition of *libertas* under the imperial régime deserves consideration. 'Suis stat viribus nec ex alieno arbitrio pendet', he says, was of course an anachronism and the *libertas* of Pliny's *Panegyric* would have been incomprehensible to the Roman

<sup>1</sup> C. G. Brouzas, *Philological Papers* (Vol. 7), West Virginia Univ. Bulletin, Series 49, No. 12-VI, June 1949. Pp. 65, with plates.

<sup>2</sup> J. B. Bury. Third edition, revised by Russell Meiggs. Macmillan, 1951. Pp. xxv+925. 16s. net.

<sup>3</sup> Arnold Toynbee. Dent, 1950. Pp. xxxiv+256. 10s. 6d. net.

<sup>4</sup> Wilhelmina Feemster Jashemski. Univ. of Chicago Press (or C.U.P.), 1951. Pp. ix+174. 37s. 6d. net.

<sup>5</sup> Ch. Wirszubski. C.U.P., 1950. Pp. xi+182. 15s. net.

of the Early Republic, but the *respublica* did live on (in the sense that the rights of the citizen were still protected), although everything now depended on the whim of the emperor—it is *libertas* on sufferance, ἐλευθερία τῶν ἀρχομένων. The author was, I thought, at his best in the final chapter ('Principatus et Libertas res olim dissociabiles') where he has some important things to say about the Stoics and Tacitus. The bibliography is adequate. In a straightforward and practical way Professor Grierson proves in his †*Numismatics and History*<sup>1</sup> how interdependent the two subjects must be: neither can afford to neglect the other. And this undoubted fact is emphasized still further in Dr. Sutherland's most recent volume, \**Coinage in Roman Imperial Policy*<sup>2</sup> (31 B.C.—A.D. 68). This is a first-class book, invaluable for students and teachers of this period, written primarily for the non-specialist (although the appendixes on the official mints and the Julio-Claudian monetary system will constitute a good ἀφορμή for further studies). The author interweaves historical narrative and numismatical evidence in the most skilful manner. There are seventeen plates, finely reproduced and fully described, illustrating the coinage from Augustus to Nero, and three indexes (Mints, Legends and Countermarks, and a General Index). The classical world has reason to be truly grateful for the work of men like Sutherland and Grierson. \**Marcus Aurelius*<sup>3</sup> (His Life and his World), the work of the late A. S. L. Farquharson, has been edited by D. A. Rees and is now published for the first time. It is necessary to say at once that the book is incomplete, for the original chapters on the administration and military aspects of the reign have been omitted. Nevertheless, despite its evident gaps (the life of Marcus *after* his accession receives little attention, and the author is almost exclusively concerned with his spiritual and intellectual progress), it remains an admirable and charming work, inspired by transparent love for its hero, but a love tempered by Farquharson's own realization that Marcus was not infallible. The character of Stoic and Christian philosophy is examined, but not very deeply. Once or twice, in translated passages, quite παρά προσδοκίαν, a discordant note is sounded, but the general style is remarkably smooth and effective. Finally, we have two books on the Age of Justinian. Professor Vasiliev regards the study of Justin as quite indispensable if the reign of his brilliant nephew is to be properly understood. The years 518–27 are, in fact, the beginning of Justinian's epoch. His book, \*\**Justin the First*,<sup>4</sup> is the only full monograph published on this subject and it represents a most important advance in our knowledge of the Byzantine Empire. Unfortunately the great mass of material, with its minute critical study and abundant notes, has become too unwieldy: the narrative is constantly interrupted and repetition is necessary. In the later stages, however, the style grows less involved. By way of contrast, the style of Professor Ure's †\**Justinian and his Age*<sup>5</sup> is clear and straightforward. His object is 'to put before the reader a portrait of a great emperor and an account of his age as we have it recorded by contemporary writers': he allows the ancient authorities, as far as possible, to speak for themselves. Thus we have a mosaic of many colours and stones, but one simple theme. It is a pity, I think, that the order of the chapters has not been altered; the wars are extremely complicated: to compress into a few pages the accounts of Procopius and his successors and still remain intelligible to the general reader is almost beyond human ingenuity. Chapters IX and X might have been a better starting-point. The little book, with its sixteen excellent plates, is a delightful reminder of its author's life-work, sympathetic, humane, vivid.

<sup>1</sup> Philip Grierson. The Historical Association. George Philip & Son, Ltd., London, 1951. Pp. 18. 1s. 7d. net. (or 1s. 6d. net for members).

<sup>2</sup> C. H. V. Sutherland. Methuen, 1951. Pp. xi+220. 21s. net.

<sup>3</sup> A. S. L. Farquharson. Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1951. Pp. vi+154. 8s. 6d. net.

<sup>4</sup> A. A. Vasiliev. Harvard University Press, Geoffrey Cumberlege, O.U.P., 1950. Pp. viii+439. 40s. net.

<sup>5</sup> P. N. Ure. Pelican Books, 1951. Pp. 262. 2s. net.



## NOTES ON SUPPLEMENTARY PLATES CIX-CXII

### HERCULANEUM

For the following illustrations we are indebted to Mr. H. A. B. White, of the Wyggeston Grammar School, Leicester, to Professor Amedeo Maiuri, who gave his permission for the photographs of the wooden article of furniture (Plate CXI) and of the bronze statuettes (CXII) to be published, to Mr. Kinchin Smith, and to Mr. J. Tobias. We are most grateful to them all.

The ruins of Herculaneum are comparatively unknown to the general public. It is a smaller place than Pompeii, but its site (some 60 feet below the modern town of Resina) makes excavation difficult and slow. At the time of the great eruption of Vesuvius it was a flourishing *municipium* of about 4,000 inhabitants, built on a regular Greek pattern, a residential rather than a commercial town. Unlike Pompeii, it appears to have carried no heavy traffic. There were fewer shops and more villas. The houses were constructed in a less uniform and more modern fashion. Its people were obviously cultured and affluent. On 24 August in A.D. 79 it was buried beneath heavy volcanic ash which afterwards solidified; in fact, whereas Pompeii was covered, Herculaneum was sealed—a fortunate circumstance, for its greater wealth and its abundance of *objets d'art* have been thereby largely preserved from robbers and the inefficiency of early archaeologists. It was discovered accidentally at the beginning of the eighteenth century (even its site had long been forgotten) when a peasant of Resina was digging a well for his house and found some *giallo antico*, a yellow marble used in Roman buildings of the richer sort. The Prince d'Elbœuf, a distant relative of the famous Prince Eugene, perceiving that the peasant had hit on something unusual, bought his land and sank subterranean galleries in all directions. He was fortunate enough (though he did not realize it) to strike the Theatre of Herculaneum, 60 feet or so below ground-level. Exploration was afterwards carried on for many years by tunnelling, with great but only sporadic enthusiasm, and the work was rewarded by finds that surpassed all hopes. However, this system has long been abandoned in favour of total excavation, made possible by modern machinery and scientific methods. At the moment much of the town still remains underground and doubtless under the hard tufa many treasures lie buried, lying as they have always lain since the eruption. It is even possible that the lost works of Greek and Roman writers may be recovered: in 1752 a whole library of papyri was found, containing *inter alia* a treatise on music by the Greek Philodemus. No less than 1,800 books were salvaged, though many were lost when attempts were unsuccessfully made to unroll them. The writings, which in Pompeii would have been perished altogether, had in Herculaneum been carbonized. Wood was similarly preserved (see Plate CXI). In another way, too, Herculaneum differs from the larger city of Pompeii: it is certain that at least 2,000 persons died in the Pompeian disaster, but only a few skeletons have so far been found in the former.



Corti's book, *The Destruction and Resurrection of Pompeii and Herculaneum*, recently published by Routledge & Kegan Paul, gives an excellent and up-to-date account of the excavations.

#### PLATE CIX

The ruins of Herculaneum as they appear today. In the middle distance is the modern town of Resina, about sixty feet above the ancient ground-level. In the background Vesuvius.

#### PLATE CX

- a. A part of the old excavations, illustrating how the houses were stripped of all their wealth.
- b. Narrow cross-roads in the centre of the portion of the town already excavated. The view is taken facing south, and this road once led down to the sea. In foreground (right) is the House with Wooden Partitions. Beyond it is a house with a balcony. The roads here show no signs of heavy traffic, such as the wheel grooves so common in Pompeii. The pavements, too, are better constructed than those in Pompeii.

#### PLATE CXI

A wooden article of furniture, probably a wardrobe, found in a very good state of preservation. Several wooden remains have been discovered in Herculaneum, carbonized but not destroyed.

#### PLATE CXII

These bronze statuettes are typical of many found in Herculaneum and are hardly less impressive than the magnificent bronze busts and statues.

Copies of the Supplementary Plates, together with the Notes, are reprinted separately and may be obtained from E. R. A. Sewter, 54 Rectory Close, Newbury, Berks., at the cost of one shilling each, post free.

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- The Model of Pliny's Villa (vol. xx, No. 58).
- Seven Latin Inscriptions in Rome (vol. xx, No. 59).



Herculaneum today



a. Old excavations



b. Cross-roads





Wooden furniture

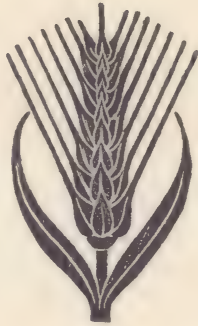


*a. The leaping pig*



*b. The stag assaulted*

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